ブックデザイン＊木谷正和［エクスプリム］

BIG COMICS SPECIAL

宗像教授異考録

第一集

星野之宣

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Munakata Kyouju Ikouroku

Yukinobu Hoshino Presents

小学館
BCS7822

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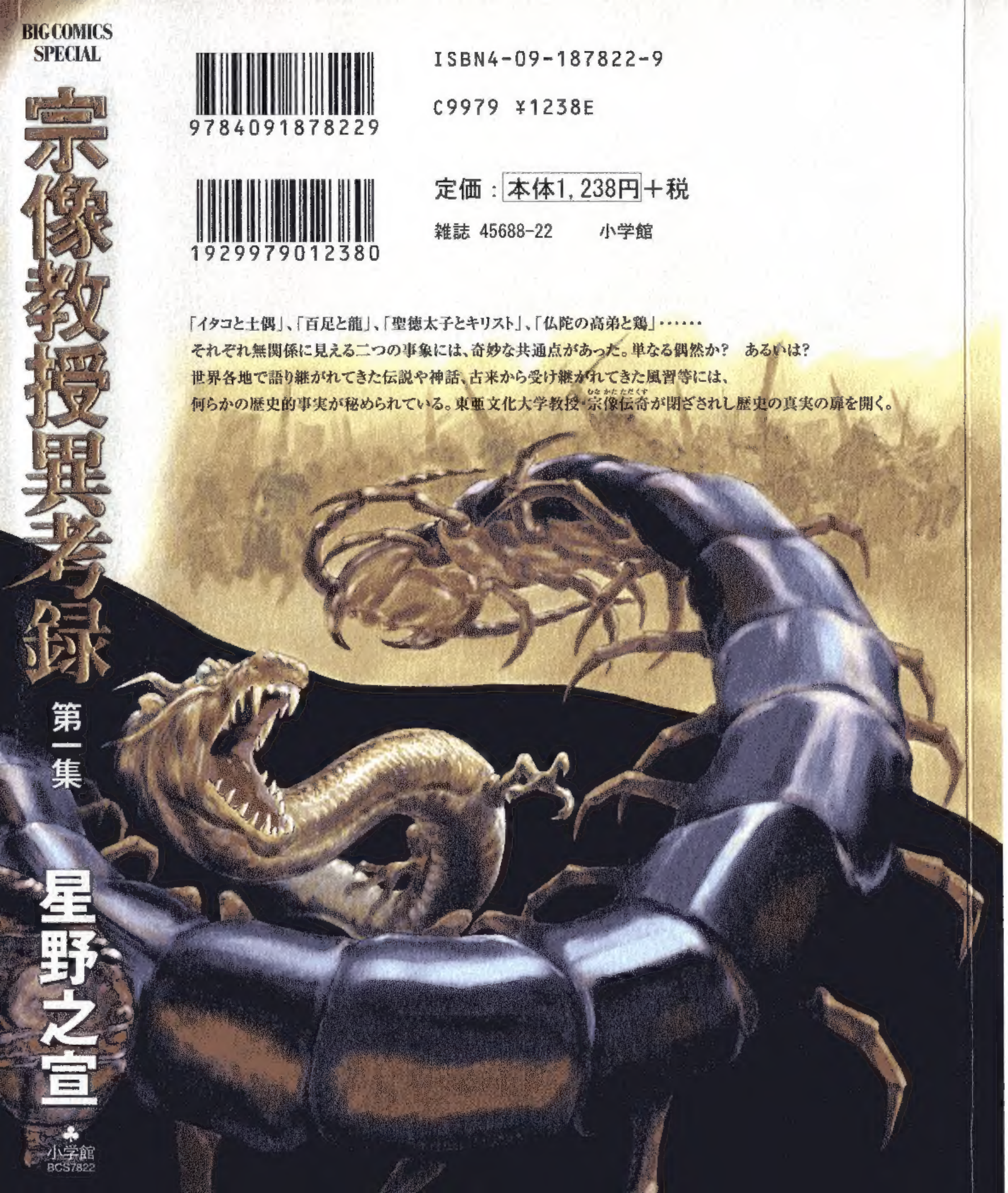
「イタコと土偶」、「百足と龍」、「聖徳太子とキリスト」、「仏陀の高弟と鶏」……
それぞれ無関係に見える二つの事象には、奇妙な共通点があった。単なる偶然か？　あるいは？
世界各地で語り継がれてきた伝説や神話、古来から受け継がれてきた風習等には、
何らかの歴史的事実が秘められている。東亜文化大学教授・宗像伝奇（むなかたただくす）が閉ざされし歴史の真実の扉を開く。



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BIG COMICS SPECIAL

THE CASE RECORDS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

宗像教授異考録

Munakata Kyouju Ikoukiroku

Collection 1

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CHAPTER 1: THE MEDIUM'S BLOODLINE

カラカラ

カラ…

カラカラ

カラカラ

カララ

ラララ

カラララ…

Yes, descend and speak! Show thyself and set foot here!

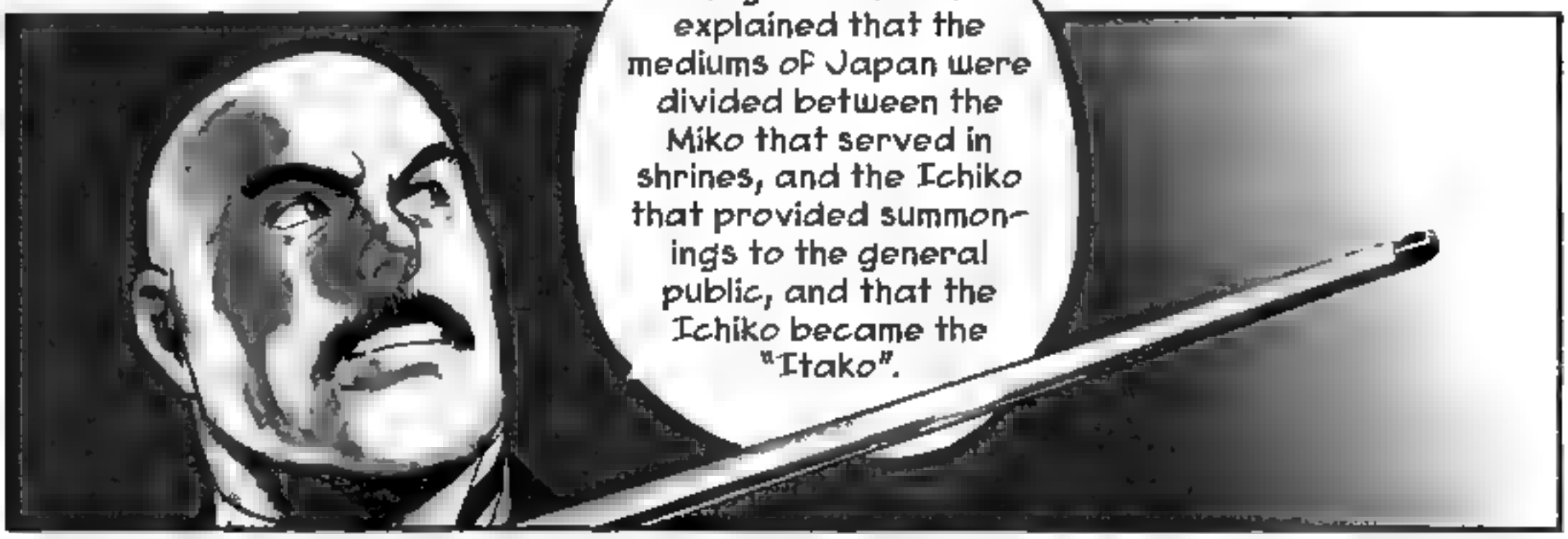
Ahhhh, ahhhh, ahhhh, the spirit of thine heir has travelled thirty thousand leagues, hastening to Paradise on Earth.

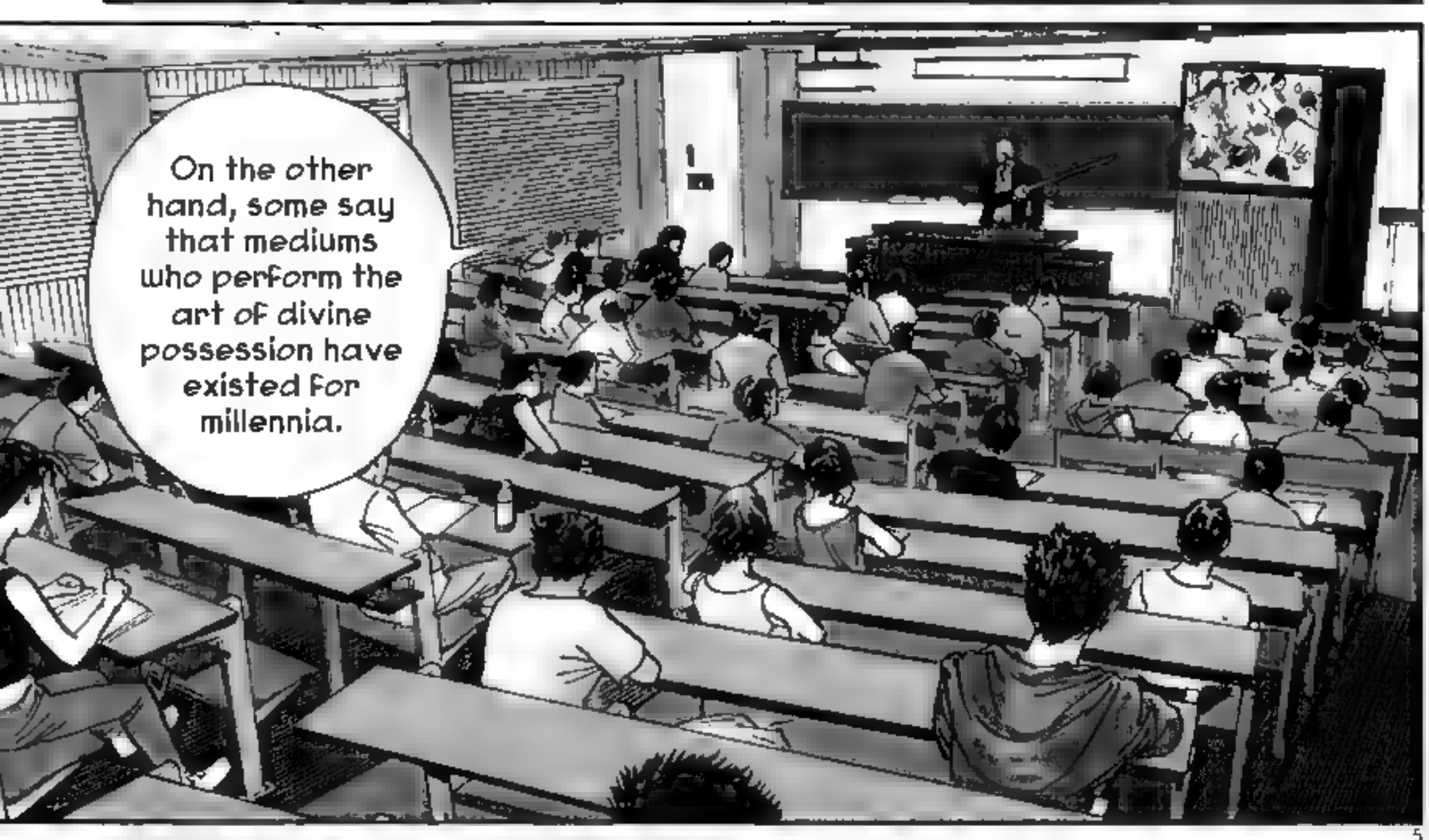
3

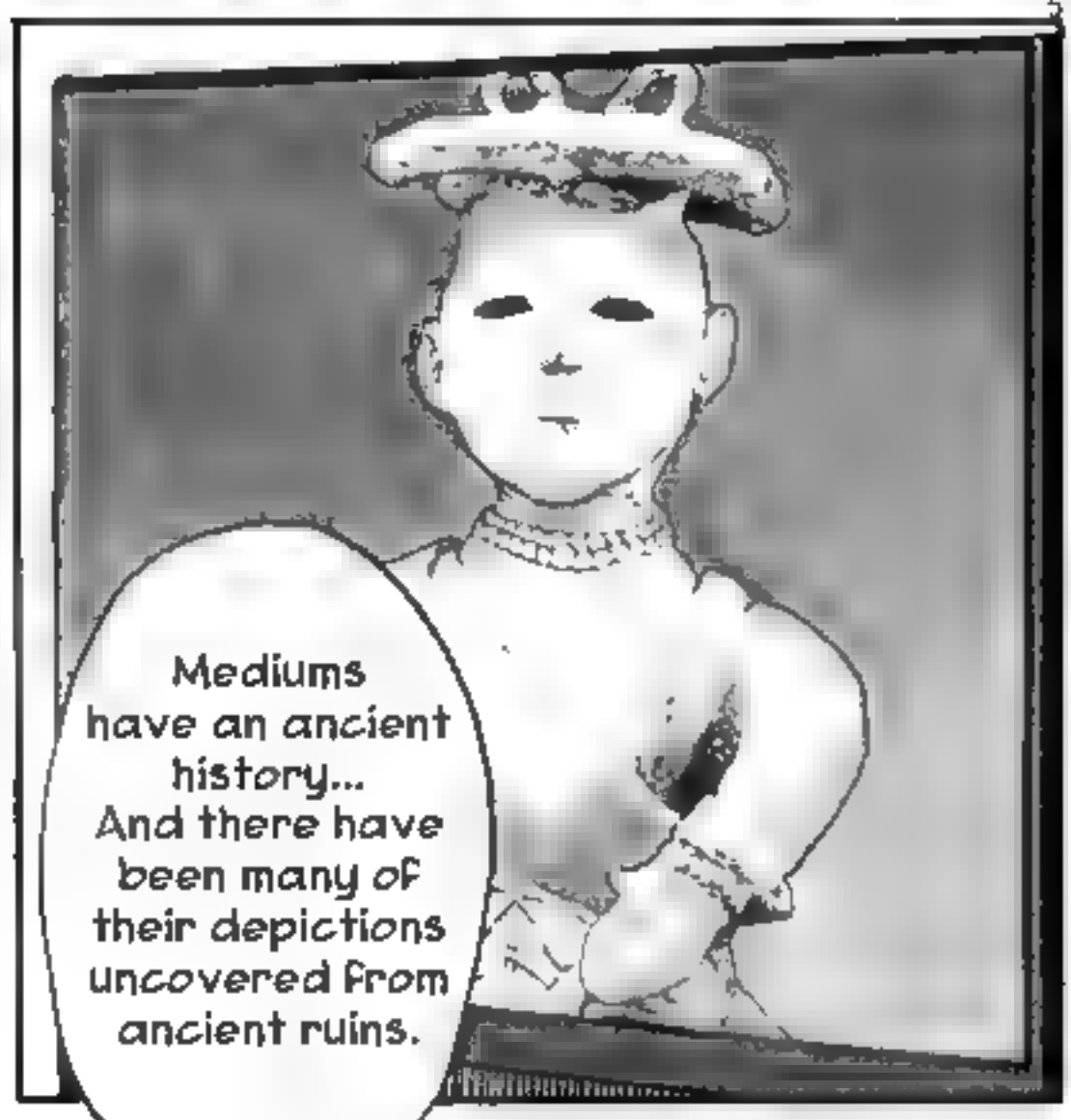
I still do not feel like I am dead... It is a true shame, O Mother...

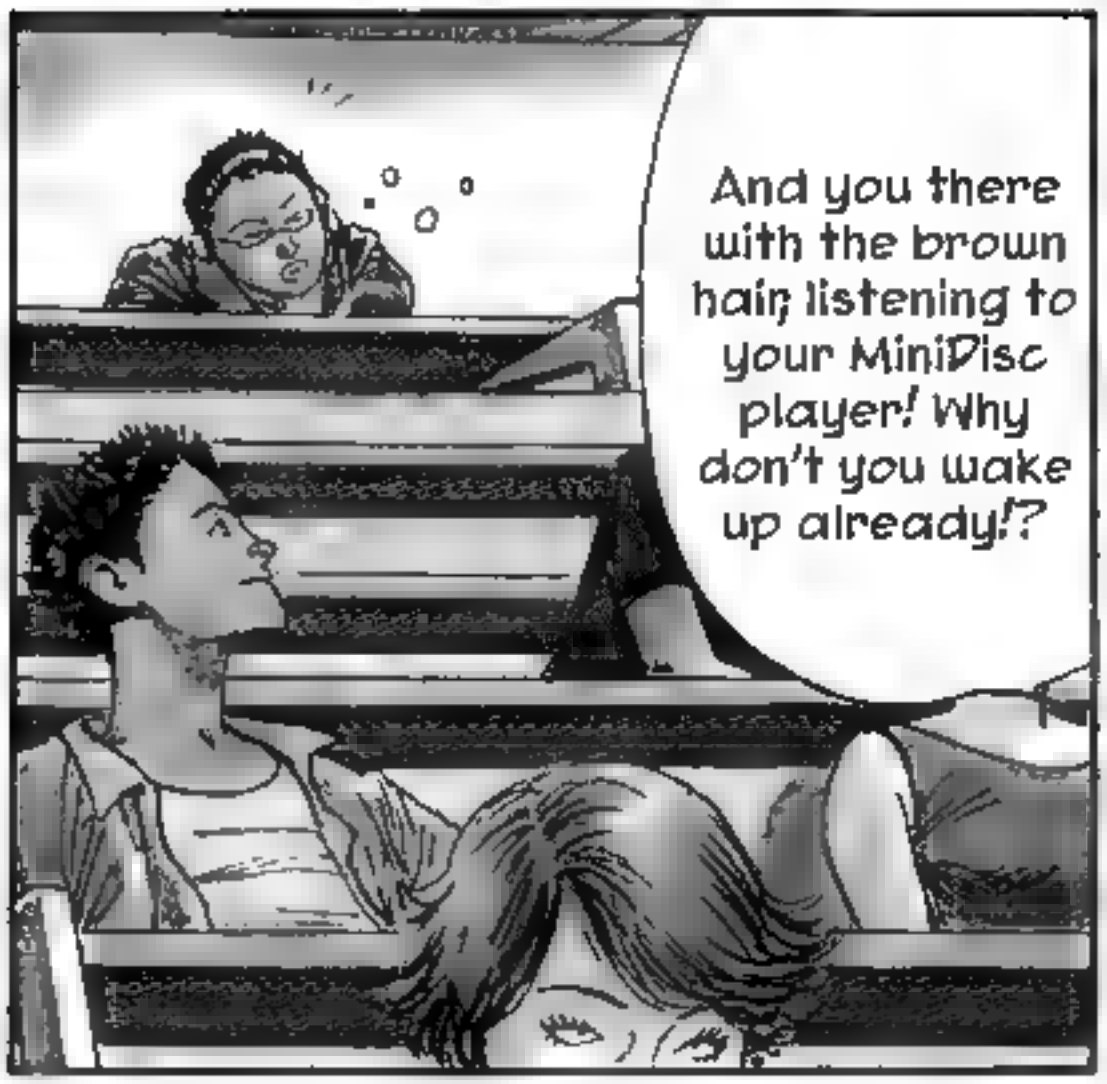
It's not perfectly clear when the "Itako", the mediums of Tohoku, first came into existence...

5


Yanagita Kunio once explained that the mediums of Japan were divided between the Miko that served in shrines, and the Ichiko that provided summonings to the general public, and that the Ichiko became the "Itako".


On the other hand, some say that mediums who perform the art of divine possession have existed for millennia.


Mediums have an ancient history... And there have been many of their depictions uncovered from ancient ruins.


And you there with the brown hair, listening to your MiniDisc player! Why don't you wake up already!?

How many times do I have to tell you to turn that infernal thing off!?

...Hmph I guess this goes to show that people never change. We will pick up where we left off in our next lecture!!

EAST ASIA UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE

7

Seven years, hasn't it?
Yes, that's right. I haven't seen you since we met in Aomori.

Miss Tsushima! My, it's been so long!

Oh, did I really, Miss Tsushima? Mmm, this looks good...

Oh, but I remember you always acted like you were talking to monkeys, Professor Munakata!

I miss the days when I had your class as my students. Nowadays it feels like I'm lecturing to monkeys.

Oh, that's right! I got a postcard announcing your wedding! I guess you're not Miss Tsushima anymore!

.....

...No, I've gone back to using my maiden name...

Oh, but I'm fine! I'm finally getting to see you again!
!
My husband died, about a year ago.
I remember back when I was a student, I used to barge in here to borrow books from you after lectures.
This is really taking me back...
I see... Hmm...
.....

It's a mask made of clay, although we're not so sure of whether or not it was actually worn...

Clay Face...?

That's a Jomon-era "clay face" excavated from Mawaki Ruins in Ishikawa Prefecture.

Aomori

Akita

Speaking of Ishikawa, they still conduct folk rituals using masks there, including the "Masked New Year", and the "Amamehagi".

These are similar to the "Namahage" festival of Akita Prefecture, and sure enough, there are prime examples of Jomon-period clay faces found here.

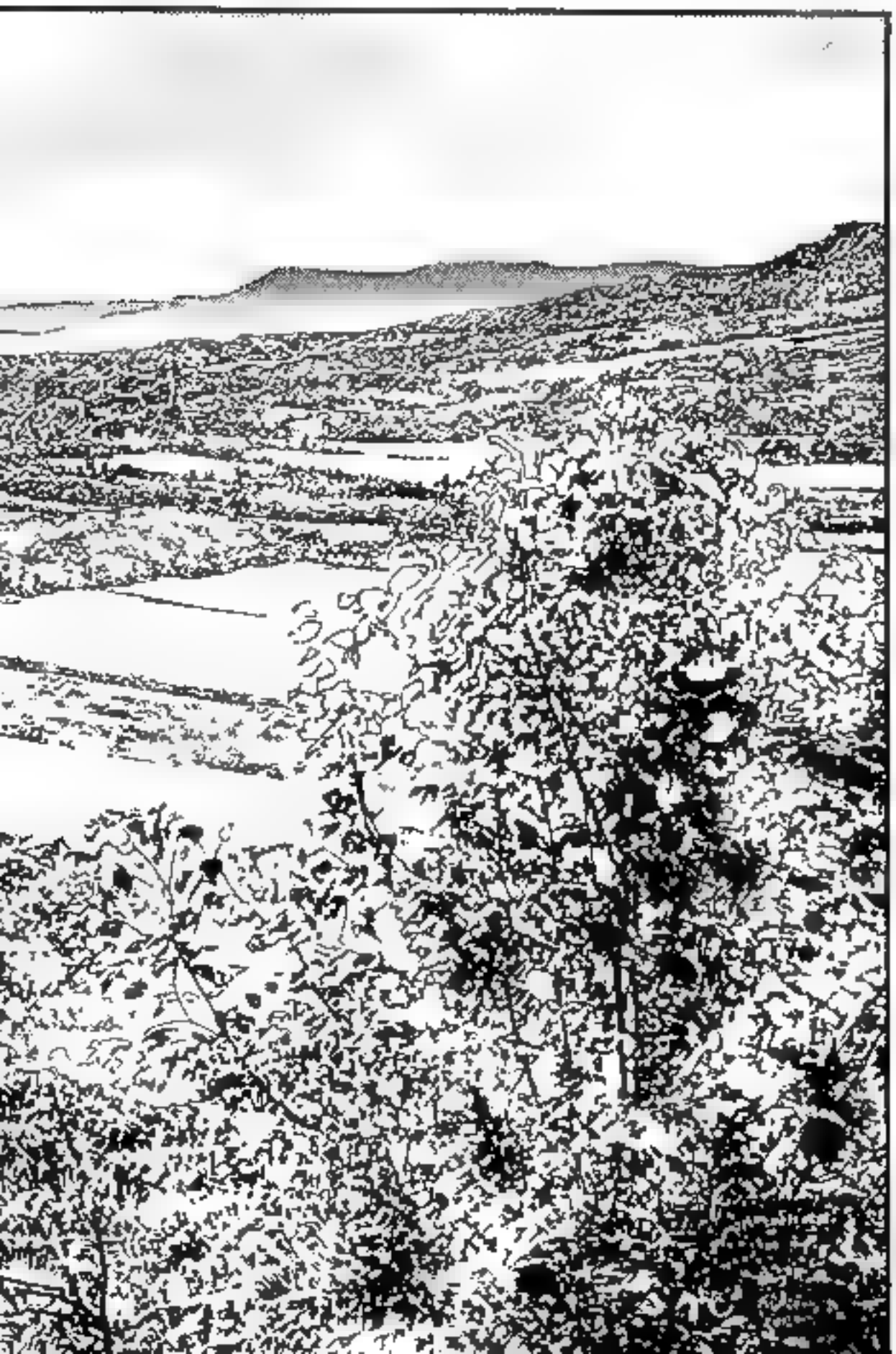
It could be that a legend from the Jomon times has lived on for millennia in these regions.

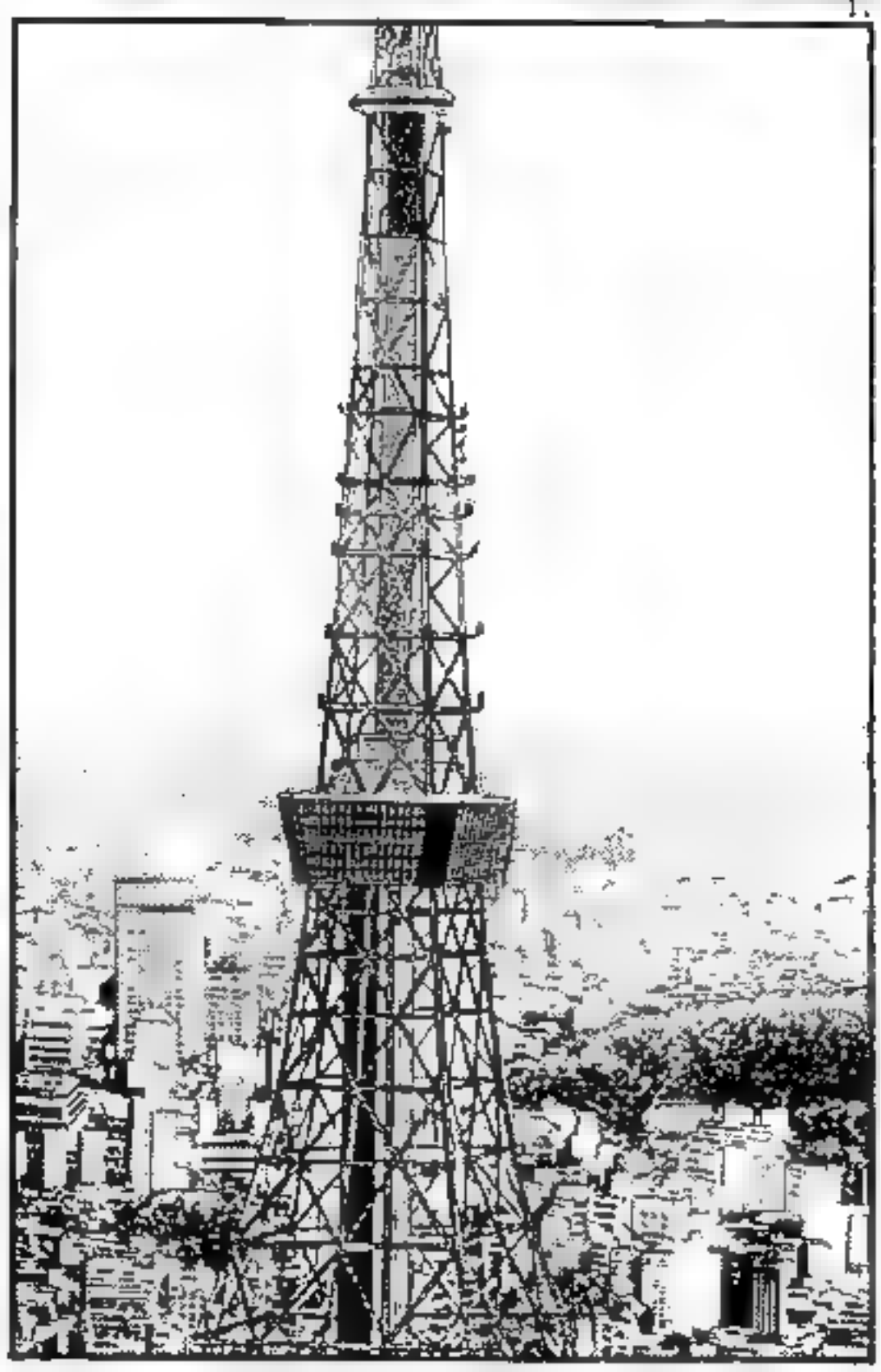
I take it that you're going back up to Aomori once your middle school education workshop here in Tokyo ends.

So why don't we meet again up there?

This happens to coincide with my current lecture theme, and I've been thinking of heading up to Tohoku this weekend.

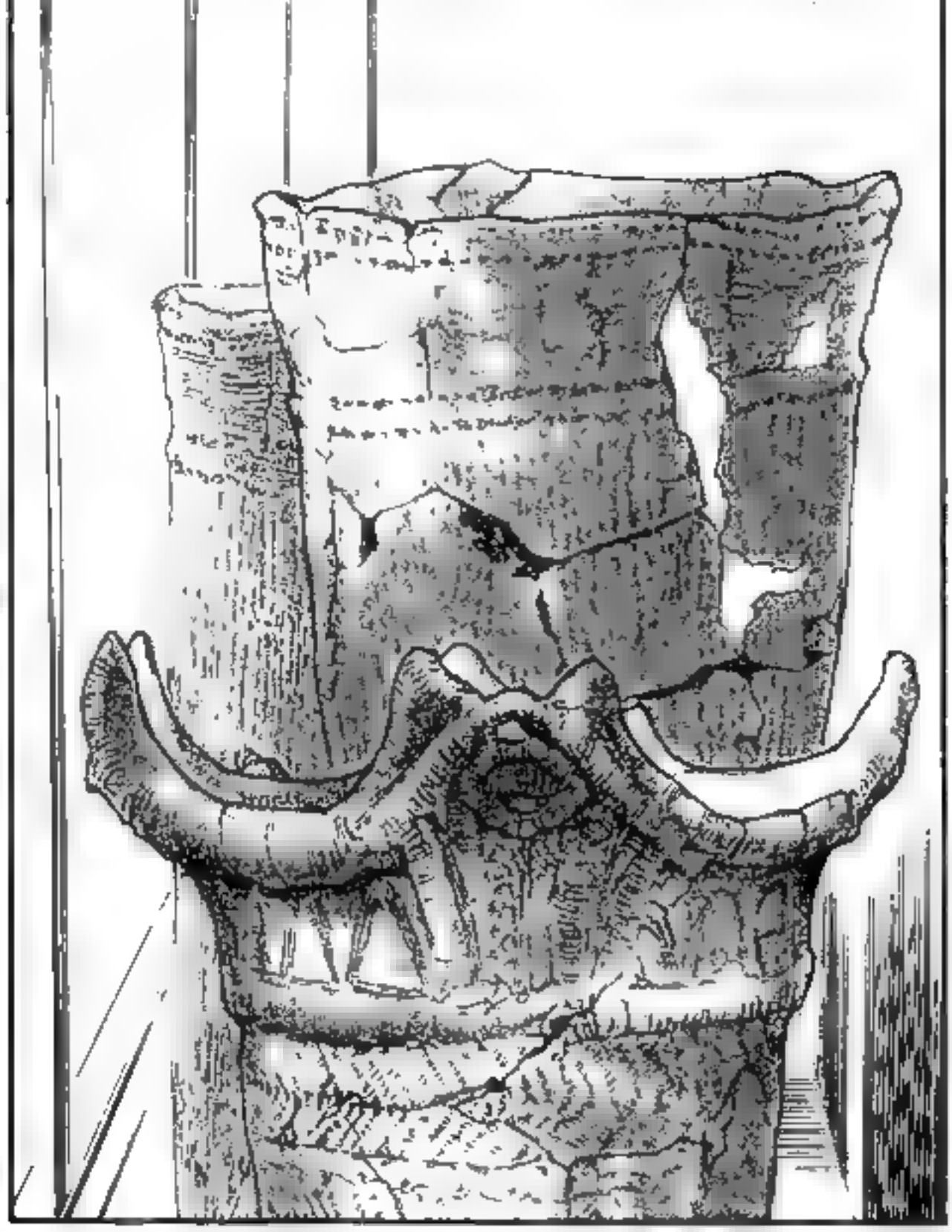
O-Okay!

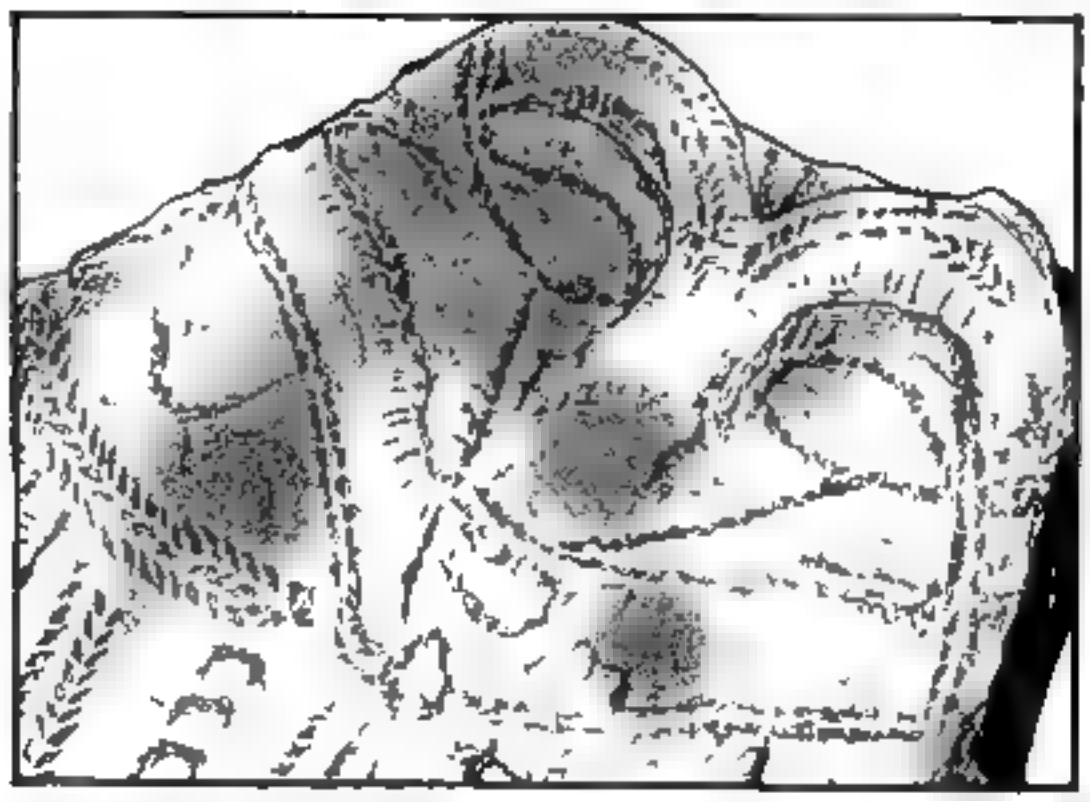


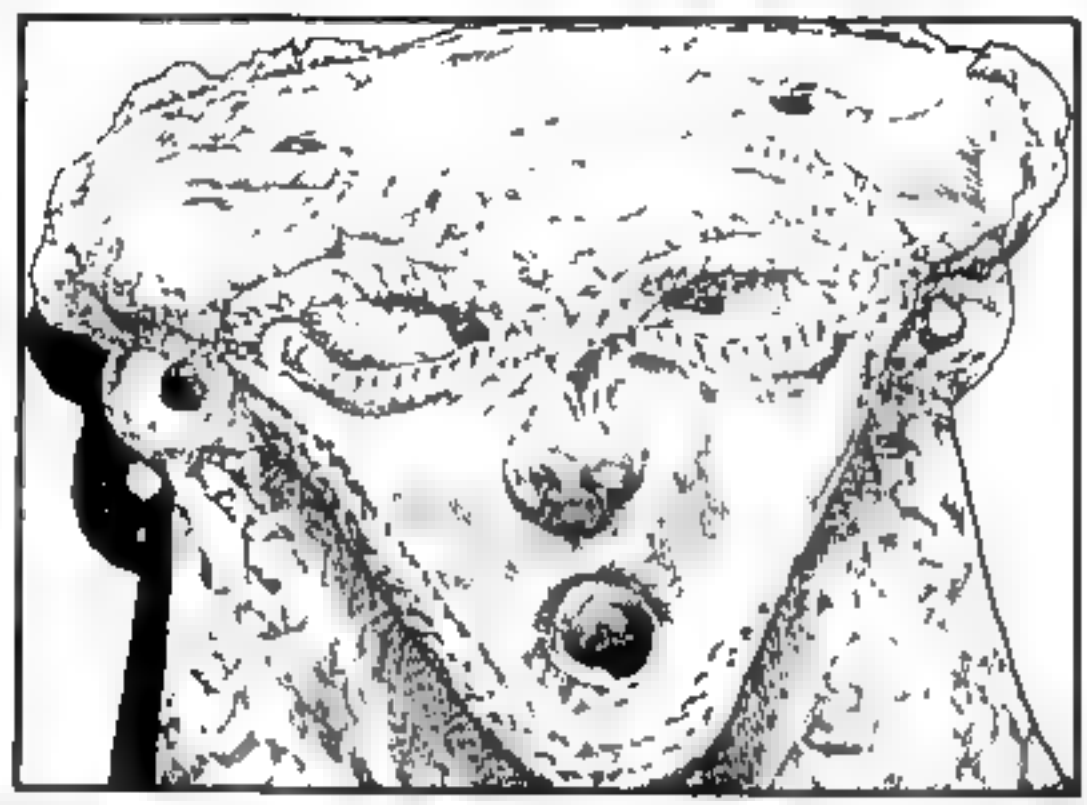


Aomori
Prefecture

Sannai-Maruyama
Ruins







Hirosaki

TSUSHIMA INN

So, you're Professor Munakata from Tokyo...

TSUSHIMA INN

It looks like they've really organized the Sannai-Maruyama Ruins in that time... Well, a lot's changed now.

This was Miss Tsushima's parents' home, which means I stayed here seven years ago.

...Uhh
...

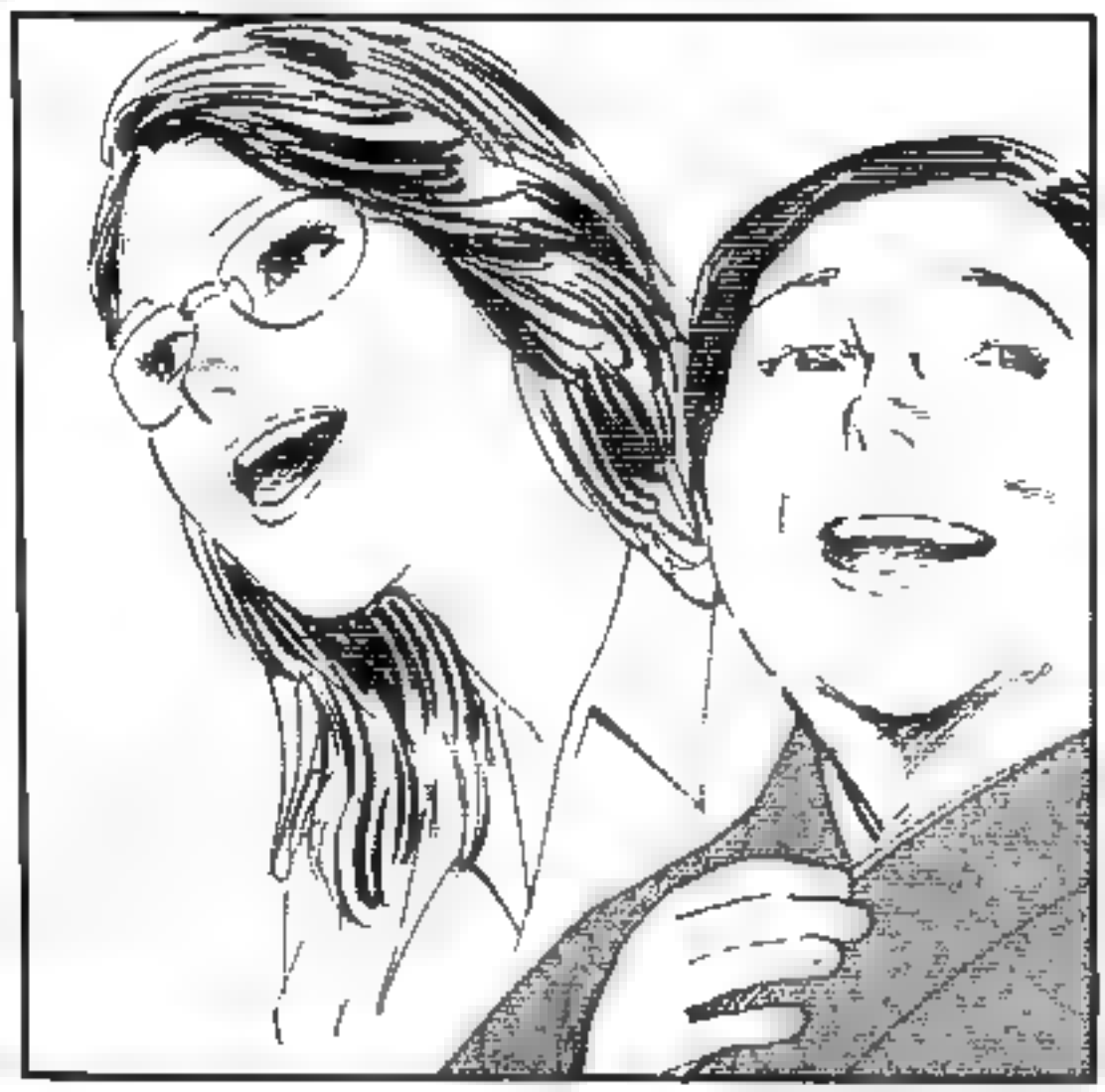
Ah, yes, I'd like to say hello to the hostess. Is Miss Tsushima's mother here?

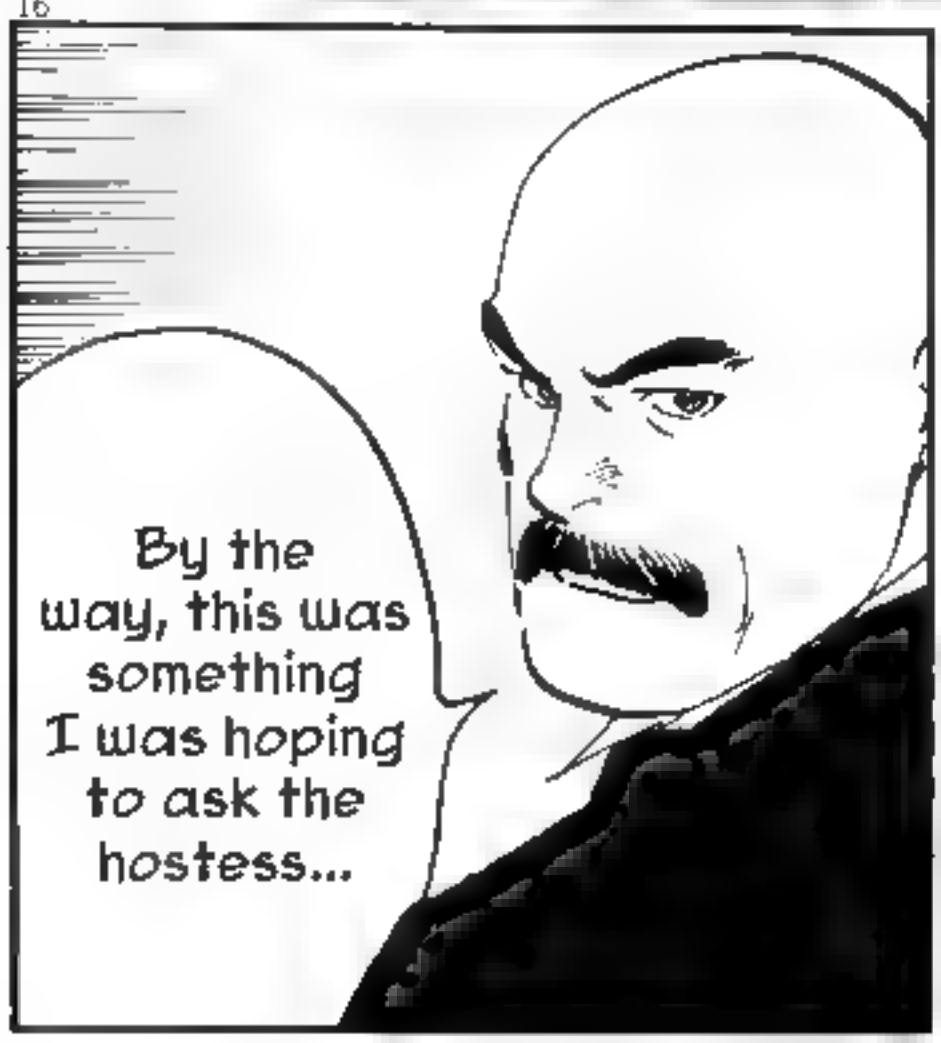
It's been four years now. She collapsed not too long after her daughter's wedding... It was a subarachnoid hemorrhage, and it came without any warning.

...Hmm
...

As her brother, I've sort of stepped up to manage the inn in her place...

...Seven years...

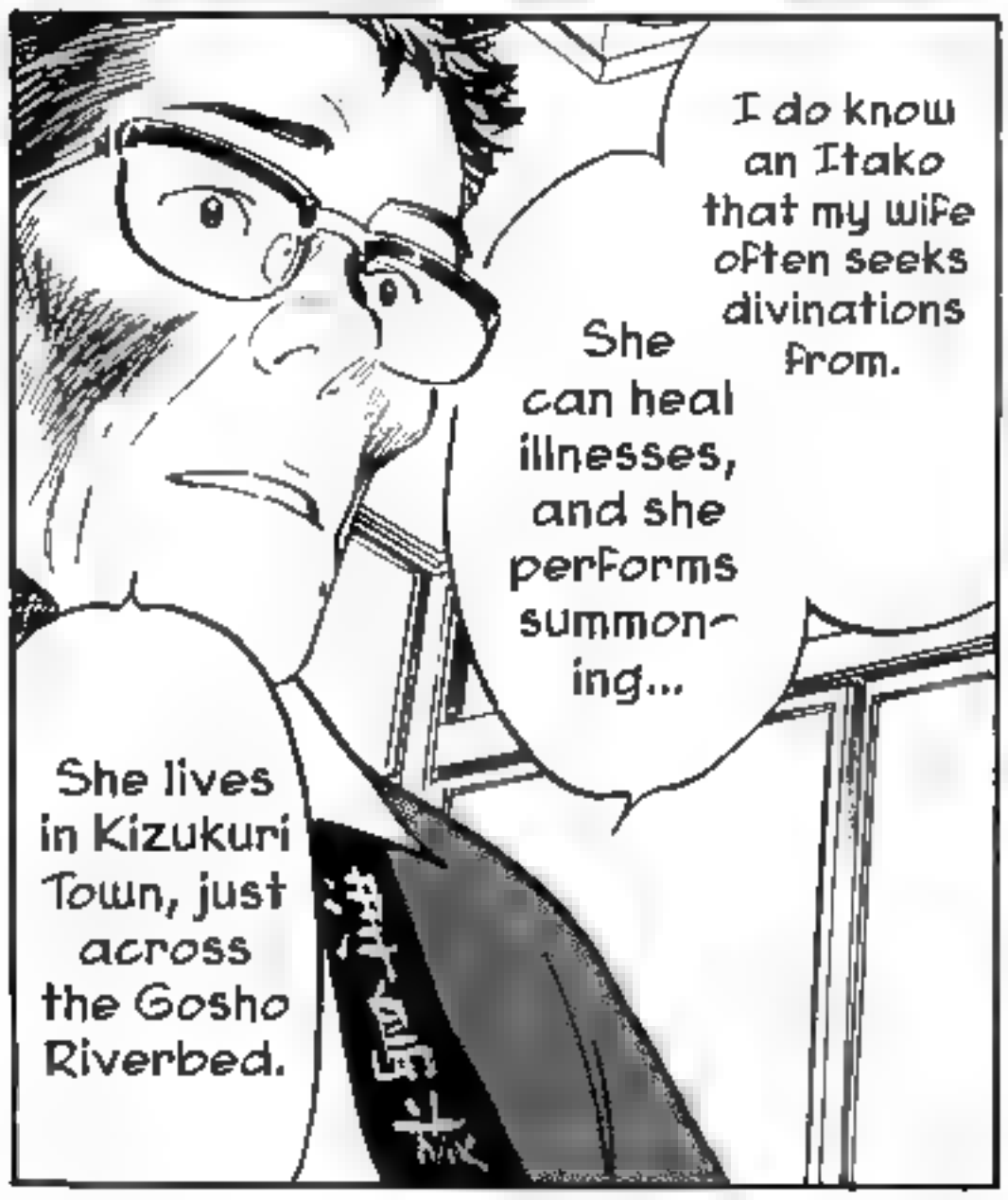



By the way, this was something I was hoping to ask the hostess...

I'm going to have to give Miss Tsushima my condolences when she returns...

Well...
I was hoping to talk to one directly. Do you have anyone in mind?

The "Itako" !?


I do know an Itako that my wife often seeks divinations from.
She can heal illnesses, and she performs summoning...
She lives in Kizukuri Town, just across the Gosho Riverbed.

The Itako only assemble on Mt. Osore in the summer-time. Don't they usually reside in different areas and perform their summoning rituals there?
Yes.

Kizukuri...

Kizukuri Town
West Tsugaru District

KIZUKURI
STATION

18

20

That's right! Kizukuri was famous for the Kamegaoka Ruins of the Late Jomon...

Well, what have we here...

That's a symbol of the Kamegaoka Ruins, and since those giant eyes resemble the ultraviolet-blocking goggles worn by northern tribes. It's known as the "Snow-Goggle Figure".

I'll bet that thing back at the station surprised you, eh? It's the talk of the town, I tell ya.

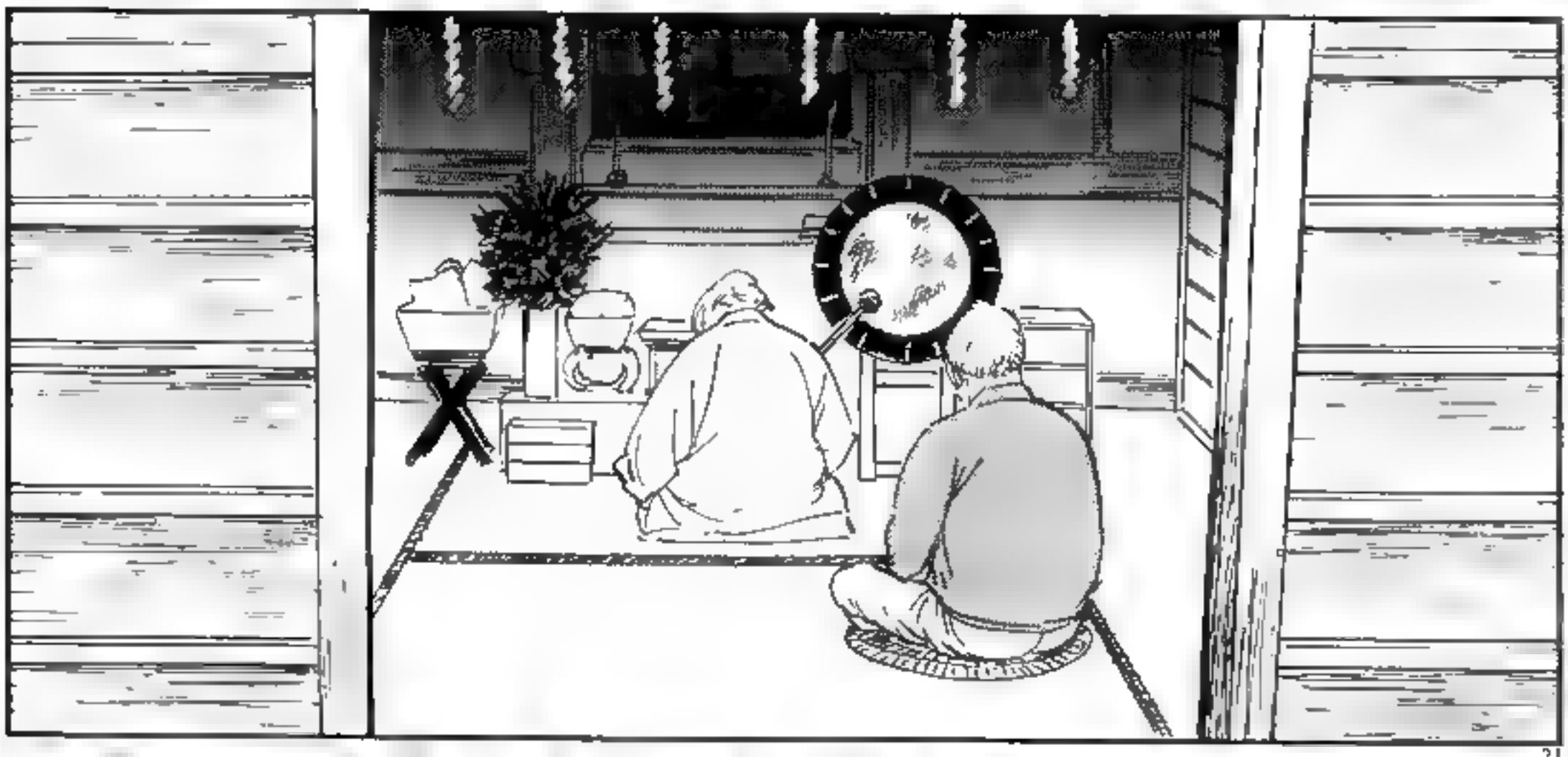
Gogglie!?

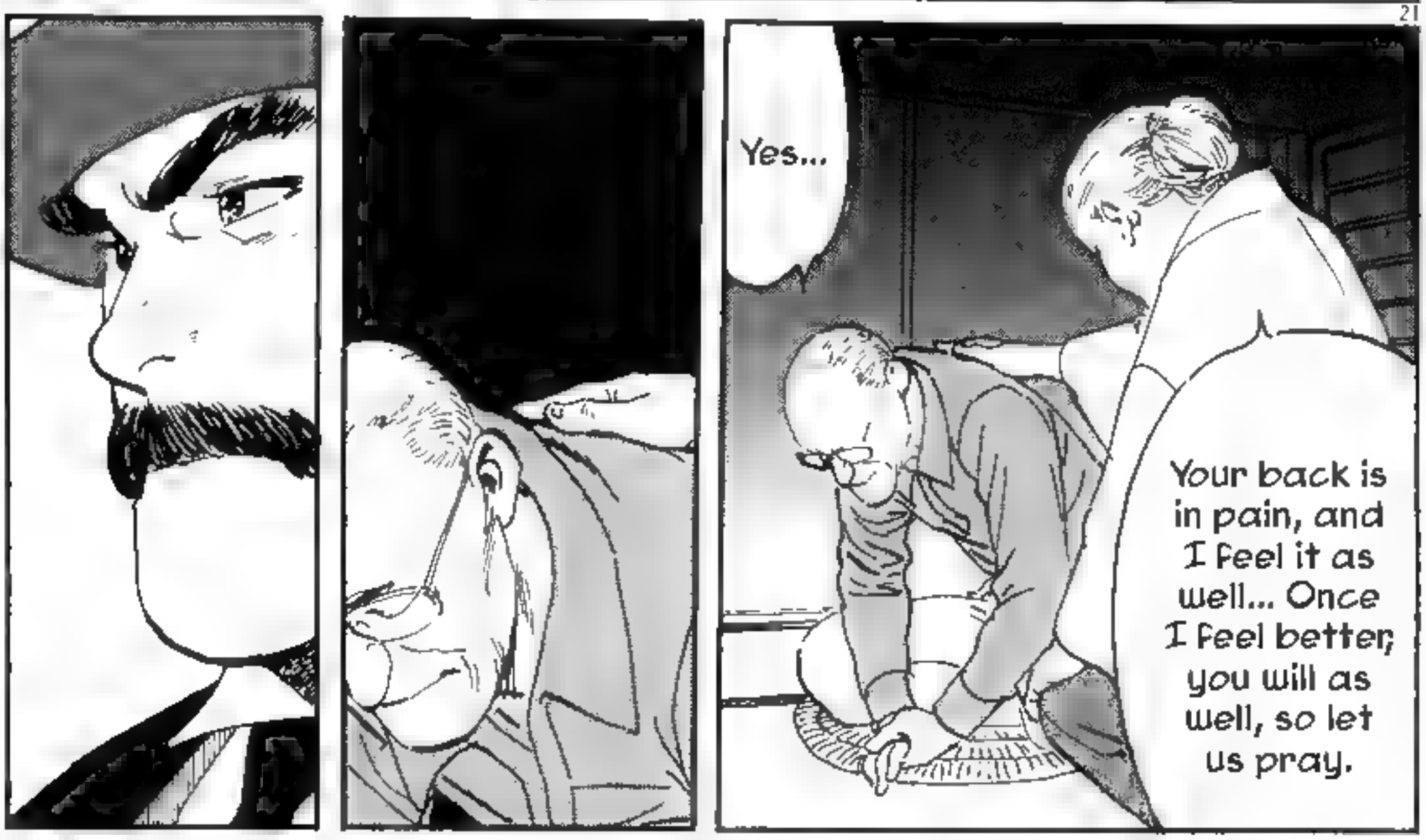
But "snow-goggle" is a real mouth-ful, so we locals call it "Gogglie".

Oh, I know.

The earthenware excavated from Kizukuri had been known since the Edo Period, which was when the ruins earned the name "Kamegao-ka" the hill of earthenware. The signature Snow Goggle Figure was discovered and preserved around that period as well, and it still emits the final radiance of the Jomon civilization

HARUKATA
Thank you very much. You've put me at ease. I'll be back soon.




Yes...
Your back is in pain, and I feel it as well... Once I feel better, you will as well, so let us pray.

You professors from Tokyo are curious folk, indeed. What could you possibly want from an old woman like me?

Akakura Haru, I presume? I'm Munakata, the man who called you earlier.

and what necessitated them.

I'm interested in how the legends of the people known as "Itako" or "Kamisama" were passed down,

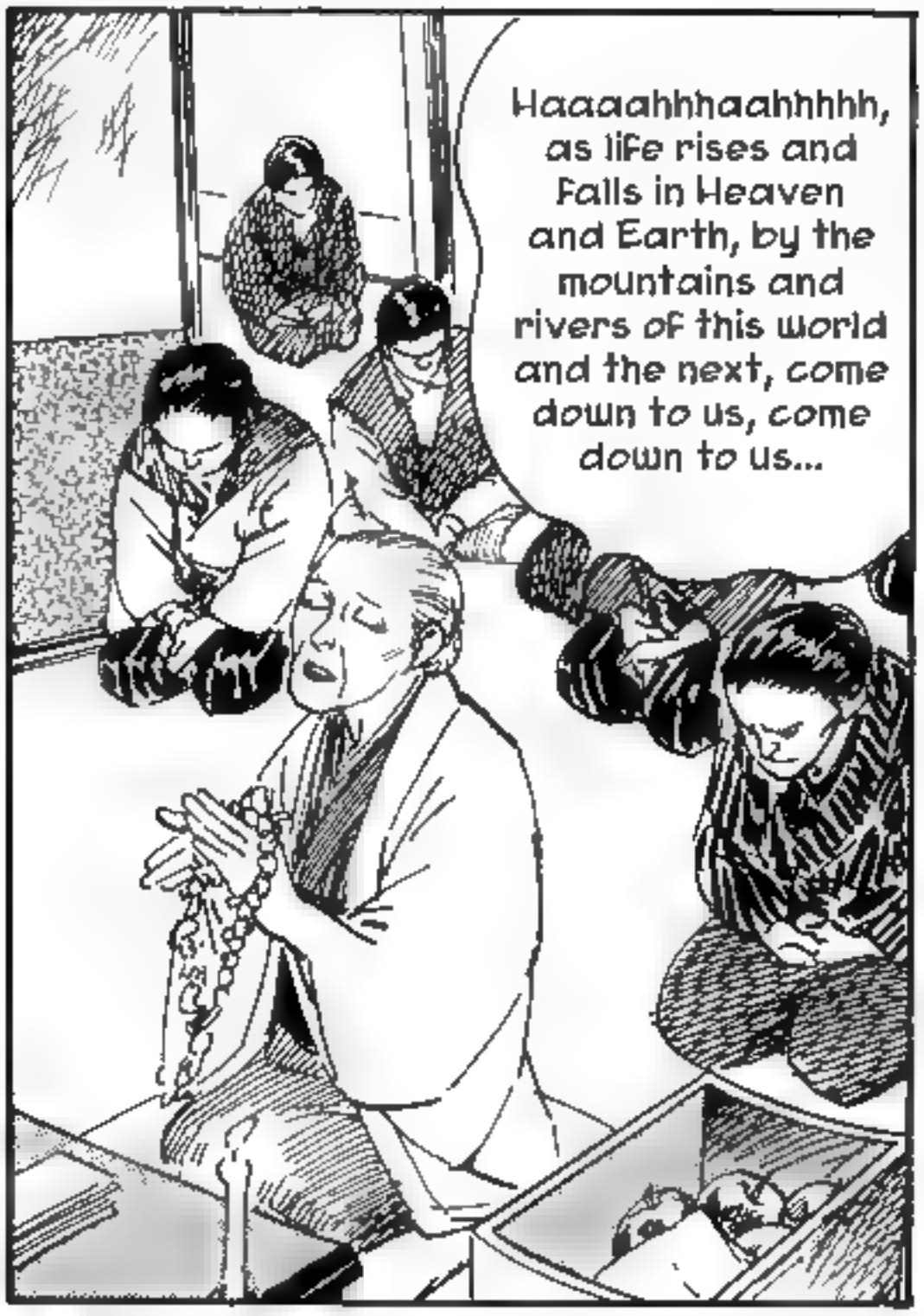
When someone had a bad back, I felt pain in my back as well. And when I tried to cure myself; I would cure him as well.
I was born blind, but when there was a sick man by my side, I could tell what ailed him, and I could feel when he was about to die... I was like that since my childhood.
My mother had an illness in her chest, and I prayed constantly that she would be healed...

My mother cried with pity upon my departure, but I considered it my destiny.

When I was twelve, my father had me become an apprentice to a nearby Itako, so that I may become one as well.

From that day forward, my Itako master became my mother.

That has been the custom of the Itako for generations...


Haaaahhhaahhhhh, as life rises and falls in Heaven and Earth, by the mountains and rivers of this world and the next, come down to us, come down to us...

Haaaaahhhahhh- heyaahhhhhhhh... O Spirit, come down to us to speak to thy daughter...

Ohhh, this is such a delight. I come down, and I see my daughter is here. I am ever so grateful...

By the mountains and rivers of this world and the next, come down to us, come down to us...

Haaahhaar-aahhhhhh... As life rises and falls in Heaven and Earth...

Haaaaahhhahhh-heyaahhhhhhhh... Come down and speak, as I call thee with thine hein show thyself...

H...Haaah-haaaahhhh-hh... A...As life rises and falls in Heaven and Earth, by the mountains and rivers of this world and the next...

27

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In the third winter, when I was fifteen, I underwent a "divine possession" in order to become a full-fledged Itako.

I fasted from grains and salt for days, and as I was performing water ablutions, my guardian deity possessed me... This was a sign that I had become an Itako!

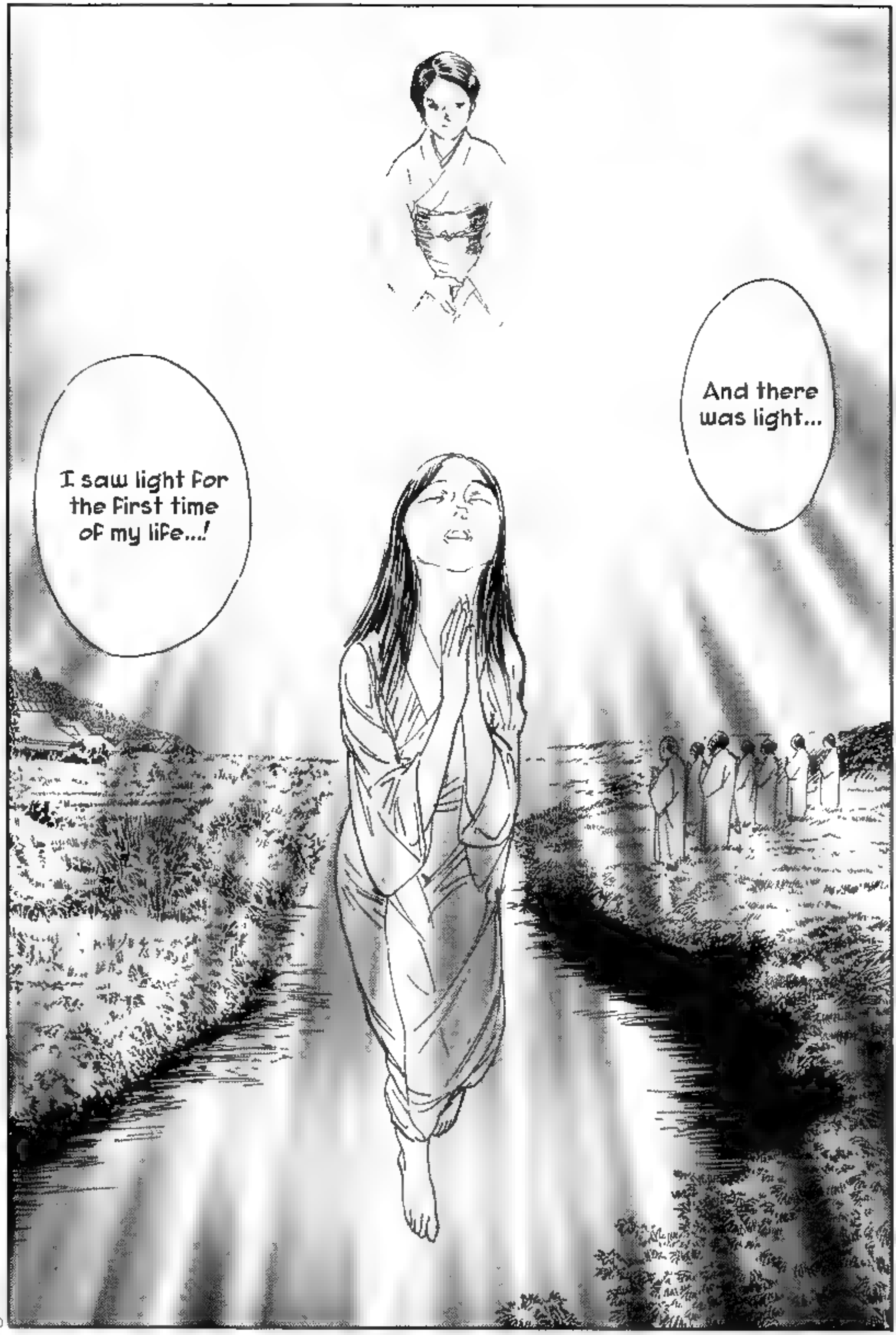
It was then that I learned that my birth mother had died.

I heard her crying with pity for her daughter, and I smelled her scent...

I heard my mother crying.

That was when the god descended!

AHH HHHH HHH!


I saw light for the first time of my life...!
And there was light...

カラカラ

カラカラ

カラカラ

カラ…

I would be in too much agony to return to my house with my mother gone, so I thought nothing of it...

The possession was over, and I had become a full-fledged Itako, yet I had to perform free service for my master for a while.

Master ...!?

Miss Itako, may I request a summoning from you?

I felt that my mother and my master knew that their time was drawing near, so they had hastened to make me a full-fledged Itako.

And I still feel the same...

HURRAH! HURRAH!!

ヤー"

THREE CHEERS FOR YOUR DEPAR-TURE!

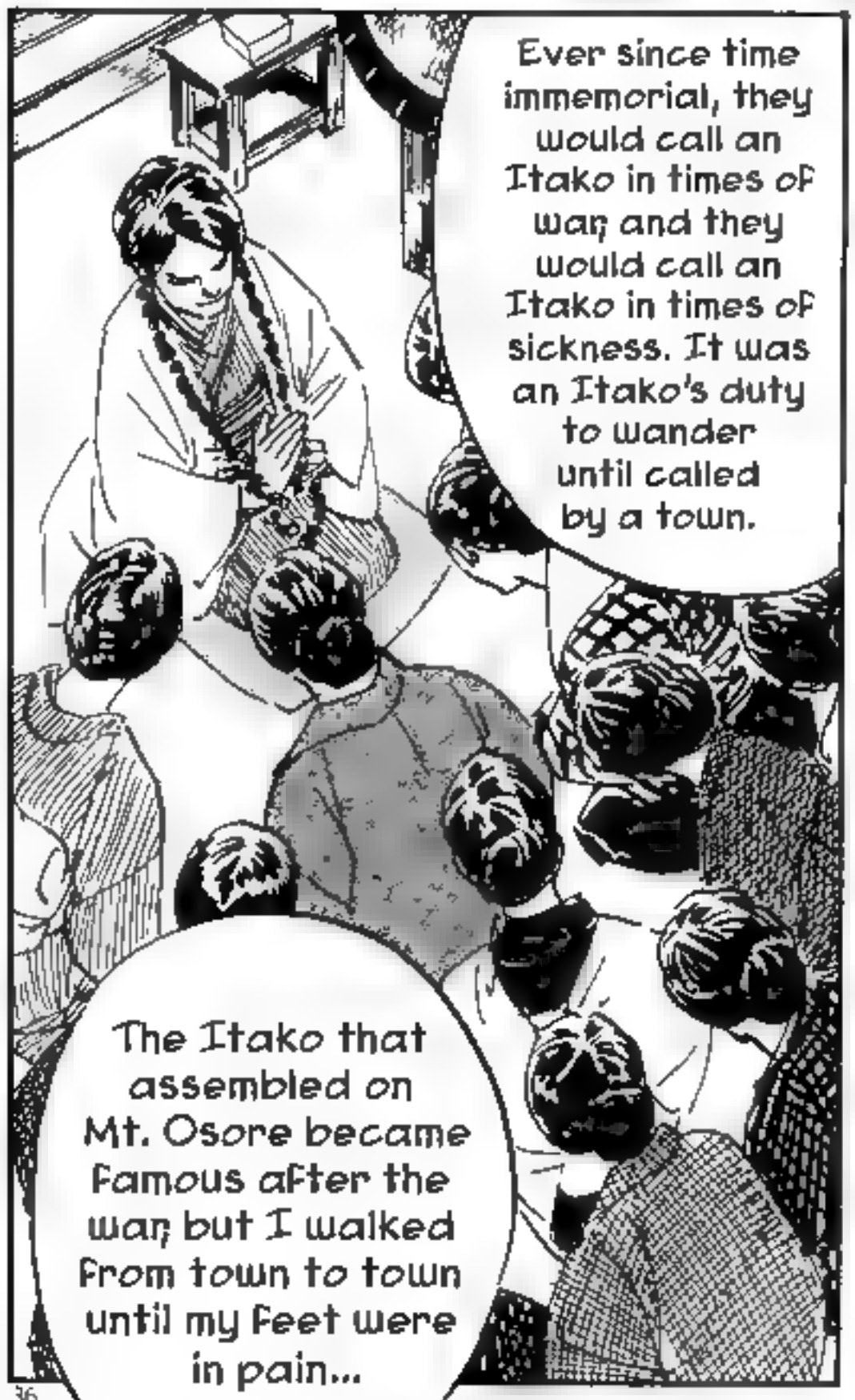
Please tell me whether I'll come back alive, Miss Itako!

Please make my son an amulet to ward death away, Miss Itako!

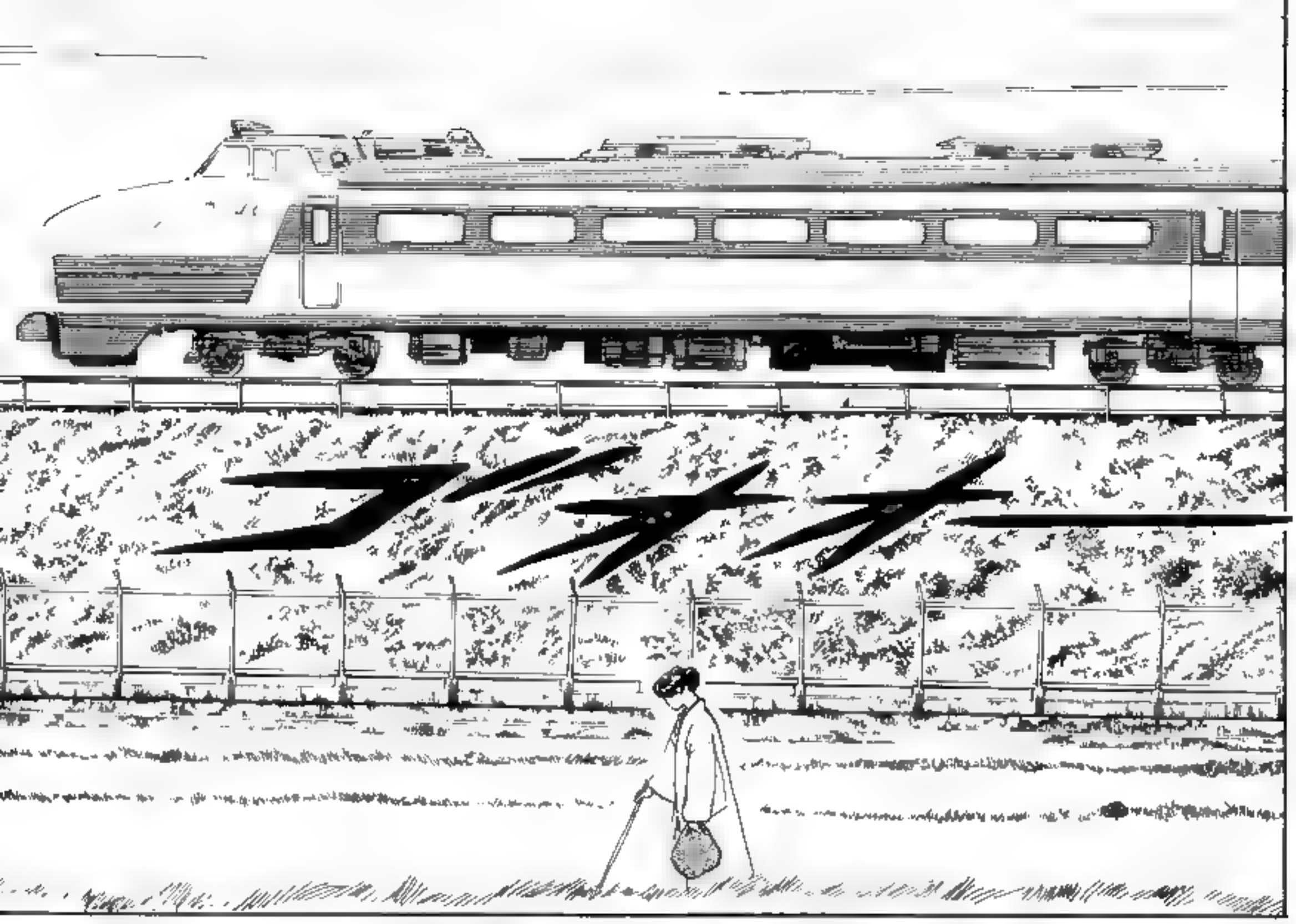
When the war began, not only was the world in turmoil, but I found myself busier than ever.

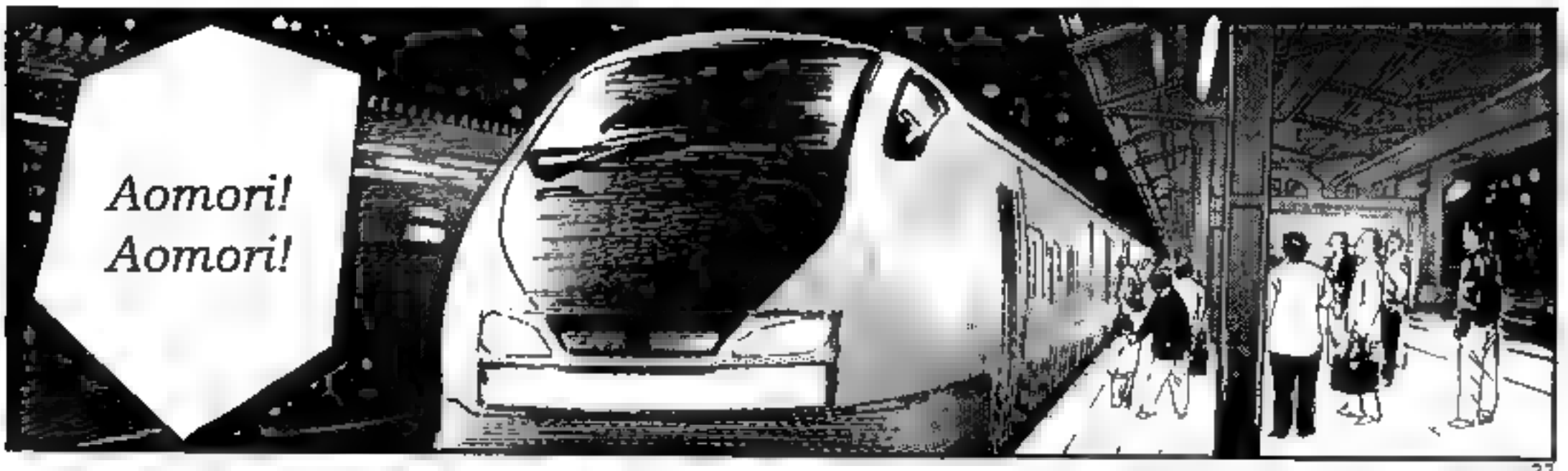
If I die in battle, I want you to summon me so I can talk to my family! Can you do that for me, Miss Itako...?

Miss Itako, will Japan win the war?


Ever since time immemorial, they would call an Itako in times of war; and they would call an Itako in times of sickness. It was an Itako's duty to wander until called by a town.
The Itako that assembled on Mt. Osore became famous after the war; but I walked from town to town until my feet were in pain...

My master told me that the work of an Itako never changes...





37

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Oh, thank you. I'm terribly sorry to make an urgent request of you when you're worn out from your return.

I bought this from a gift shop in Aomori. Are you going to use this replica to decorate your office?

Eyes !?

Yesterday, I was looking at the miniature clay figures in Sannai-Maruyama Ruins' exhibition, and I was thinking about "eyes"...

Originally, most of the clay figures of Japan had hollow eyes without pupils. The same goes for the terracotta figures that came later.

But the Snow-Goggles Figure's eyes have a straight horizontal line, and they are massive enough to cover the entire face.

There are differences in each region, and those features decline the Farther away they are From Tohoku.

Looking at the unearthed articles, you can tell that the eyes became gradually exaggerated and larger over time.

But what exactly could it be that these unique eyes and features that peaked in Late Jomon Tohoku represent...?

Don't mention it... That was years ago.

Ahh...

I heard that your mother has passed away. I know this is late, but you have my condolences.

Inciden-tally, Miss Tsushima...

No, I'm really alright, Professor Munakata. I've forgot-ten about it already.

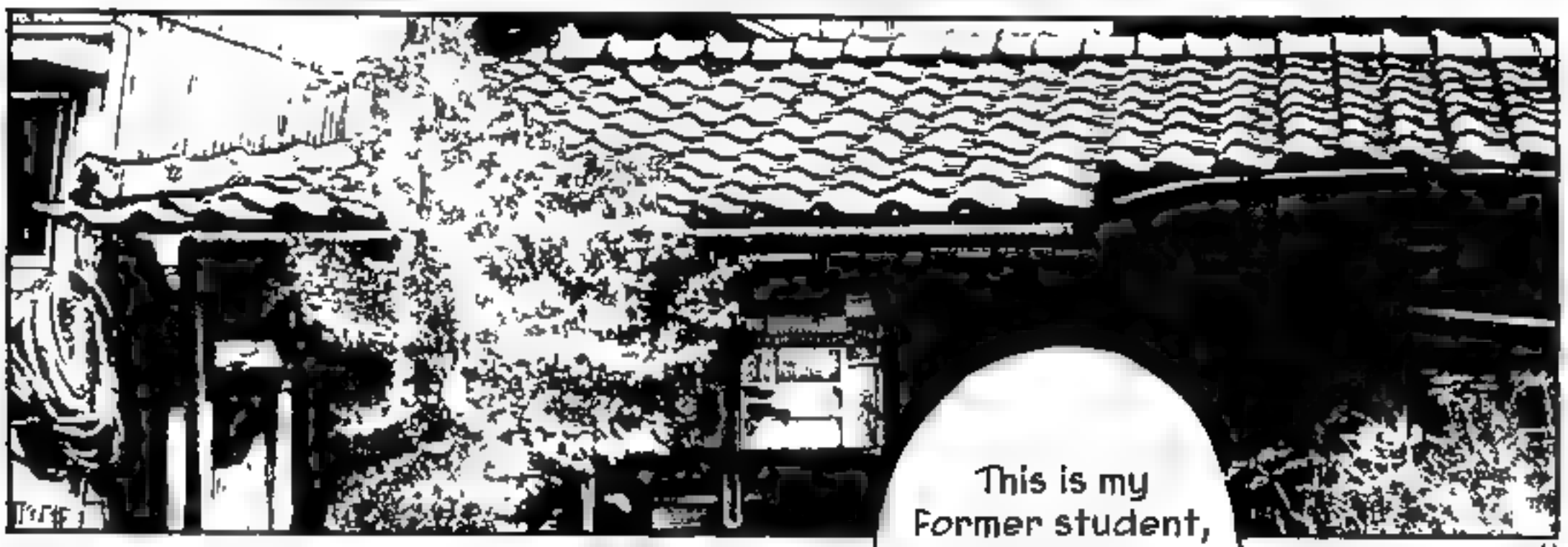
You must, uh... have it hard...

An Itako...?

She's an Itako that your uncle introduced me to, and I promised her that I'd hear the rest of her story.

.....

I'd like you to join me in visiting the ruins and museums in the prefecture tomorrow, but before that there's someone I'd like you to see.


This is my former student, Tsushima Ryoko... She's a middle school teacher in Hirosaki.
Ryoko
...
.....

I'm so glad you came, Ryoko. I'm so very glad you came.

!

Your husband is with us over here, and he's so worried for you. I'm so sorry...

It must've been hard for you to be all alone. I'm sure you were lonely.

Your husband says that he committed suicide because his work was going nowhere, but he's sorry for thinking of no one but himself, Ryoko.

He feels sorry for you, living all alone and blaming yourself...

He wants me to tell you he loves you...

.....

A... AHH HHH HHH HHH...

UUH HHH HH...

IT WAS PAINFUL... IT WAS SO PAINFUL, MOTHER!

MOTHER !!

AHH HHHH HHHHH HHH...

Yes, yes.

Your mother's always with you. So you don't need to blame yourself, Ryoko.

It was so soon after my mother's death, so it broke my heart...
I had no choice but to push everything deep inside myself.

...My husband jumped to his death because of overwork.
He did it suddenly, without telling me a thing.

I don't blame you...

What is it ...?

Now, Haru, I'd like you to hold this.

Alright... Let me see...

It's a replica of an ancient bisque clay figure. I'd like you to feel it, and tell me what impressions you have of it.

That's what they say. The majority of clay figures are female.

It has large breasts... Is it a woman...?

She only has one leg.

If a person's leg is diseased, they would destroy the figure's leg... They would pray for recovery by creating a scapegoat.

It's called "homeopathic magic".

It's modelled after the figure discovered in Kizukuri, but many of the clay figures are discovered in broken states. Some say that they were buried broken on purpose.

Then she is like me...

...Hmm!

An Itako can tell when someone's leg is hurting because their own leg hurts.

Then we pray for it to heal.

It's a bead necklace with the claws, fangs, and horns of beasts.

These angular brooches and neck-laces... These are beads to ward off evil.

See, I have an "Itaraka Rosary".

Hmm!
She cannot see.
These eyes are closed...

It's the figure of an Itako, made such that even an Itako can tell...

This is an Itako...

The late Jomon period .. Even in this time period, blind mediums travelled from village to village around Tohoku, healing illnesses and performing summonings.

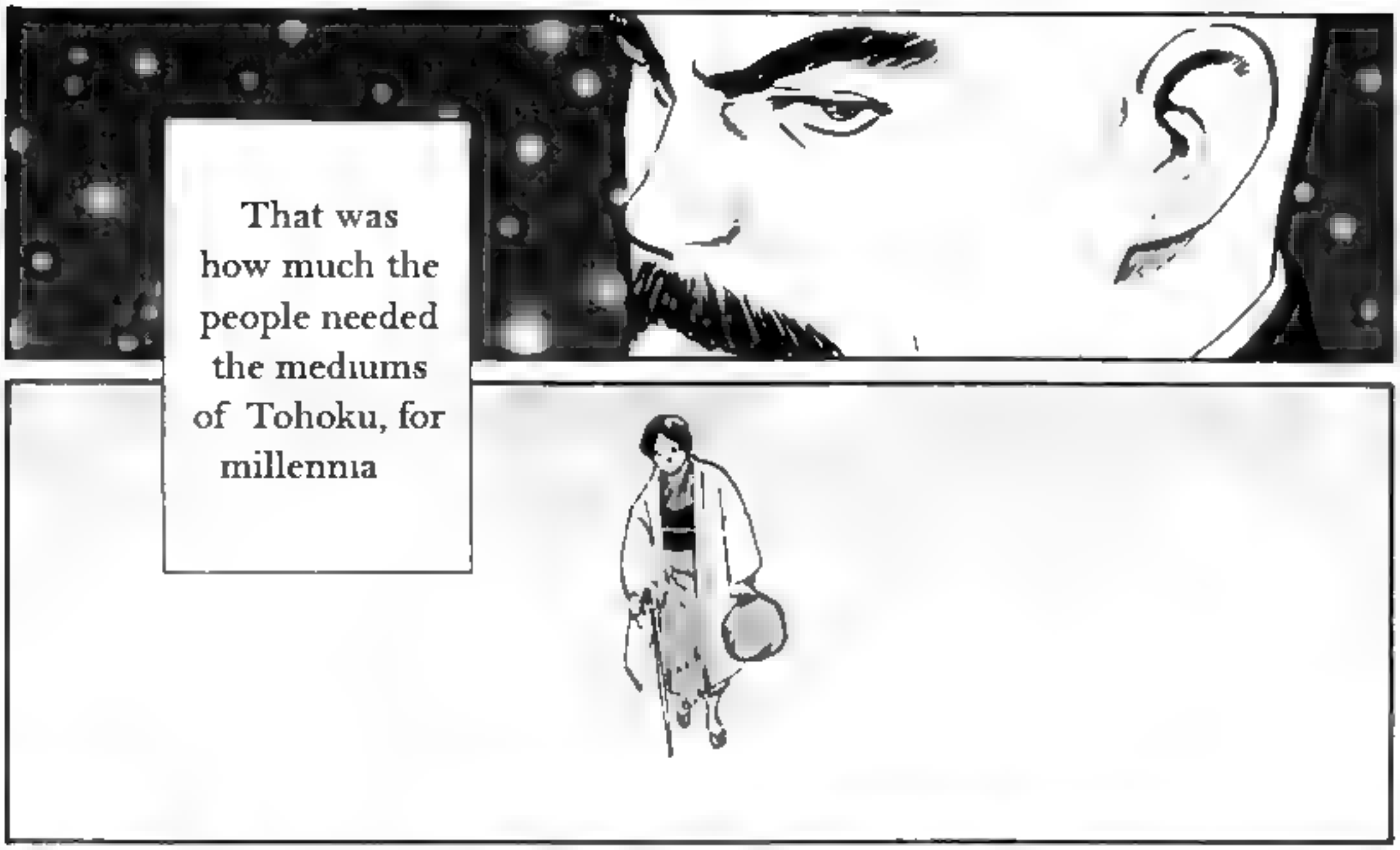
But they were hindered by the climate cooling...

They created substitute mediums, and placed them in the snowed in villages.

They were the representations of the mediums, which guarded the village against illness and injury ..

The mediums themselves must have had to feel them to confirm them and put their souls in them

Their features were exaggerated so that they could be distinguished with their fingertips, resulting in their unique shape.


That was how much the people needed the mediums of Tohoku, for millennia

Thank you very much...

Please take care...

You have been most informative.

Do come back...

I couldn't get you to do that, but apparently an outstanding Itako could...

There are times when releasing all of your emotions can be therapeutic.

I didn't think she'd perform a summoning for me. Sorry for getting flustered...

AOMORI
...So I guess that talk about the Jomon period clay faces and modern masked rituals just came off the top of your head?
I got material for my next lecture out of this, and you got a little peace of mind. Not bad for a coincidence.
You saw I was depressed, and came all the way to Aomori for me...
Profes-sor...
This just goes to show that there are many things connecting the past and the present.
Come back and see me soon...

ANA

全日空

5b

...Now for today's news. Personnel of the JGSDF North Eastern Army being dispatched to Iraq to join the coalition force, are departing from Aomori Airport this afternoon via government plane. Their families have come to see them off. .

THE OAKE RECORDS OF PROFESSOR MIYAKAWA

CHAPTER 1

PRESENTED BY

HOKUTO NO GUN

TRANSLATED BY

SYSTEMATICCHAOS

EDITING BY

HIGHTIDE AND KAZUHIKO

PROOFREADING BY

DESTORYERRING

CHAPTER 2:
THE CENTIPEDE AND THE DRAGON

. Long, long ago, a master archer named Tawara Tota was crossing the bridge of Seta in Omi, when a giant serpent blocked his path.

Tota stepped over it without a second thought to see. .

The serpents of our clan are being slain by the giant centipede of Mt. Mikami. Please, lend us your strength. .

I have been waiting for a man of valor such as you.

Sir Tota, the centipede is weak in its throat. .!

Tawara Tota went to Mt. Mikami with his retainers, when what should he see but a giant centipede. It attacked him, in defiance of his arrows

This is the legend of the battle between the centipede and the dragon, told in Mt Mikami, Shiga Prefecture.

Having defeated the giant centipede, Tawara Tota was invited by the Dragon King living in Lake Biwa, and was given great treasure

Senjogahara,
Tochigi Prefecture

Meanwhile, in the Nikko region, there is a legend of the god of Mt. Akagi transforming into a giant centipede to face the god of Mt. Futara, who had transformed into a serpent, in battle.

In this battle, the serpent enlisted the aid of Sarumaro, the master archer of Mt. Atsukashi in Mutsu, and he defeated the centipede by shooting it in its right eye

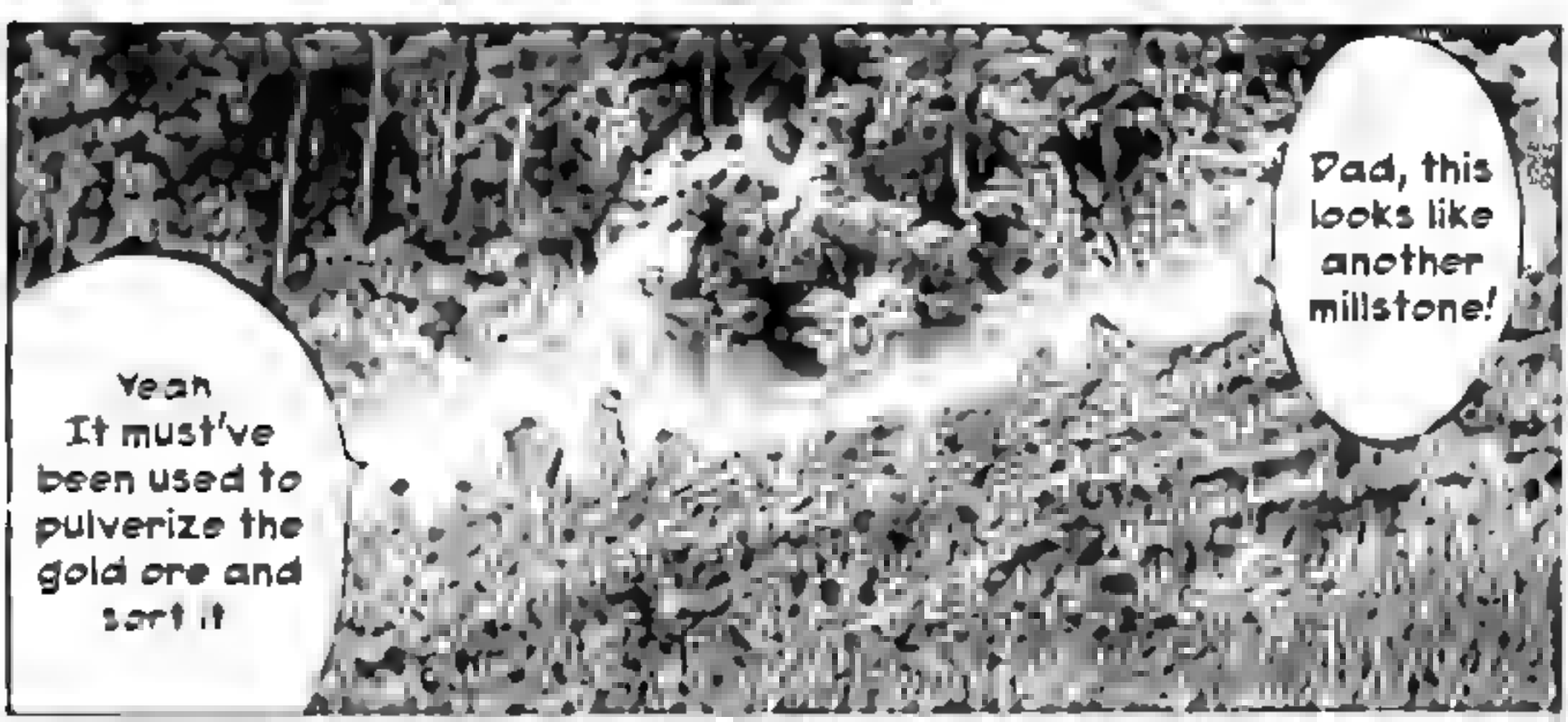
KOFU STATION

There must be some kind of common meaning behind these similar legends held in both Shiga and Nikko. And it must be in other areas..

Mt. Daibosatsu
Yamanashi Prefecture

Okay! Measure the distance to those ruins!

Got it, Professor!



I can't believe you found us this deep in the mountains, with no cell phone coverage!

I happened to run into him as he was going down to get food, and he showed me here.

P... Professor Munakata?

I went to Furin University in Kofu, and they told me you were here on a dig, so I hope you don't mind me disturbing...

So these are the ruins of the Kurokawa settlement, where Takeda Shingen's gold mine was...

It sure is cold up here.

Nice to meet you, Yae. Professor Tatsunami and I have known each other since we attended the same symposium...

We're studying the ruins of the mine and the living quarters. My students are working for me, and daughter Yae is helping me out.

It won't be much, but I'd like you to teach me some-thing...

So what do you need?

Nice to meet you. I've read the manu-script you sent my father.

Alright! Once we're done levelling and measuring, we'll start studying the settlement ruins!

Yes, please do, Usami!

Alright, Professor Tatsunami, we're get-ting back to work!

The battle between the centi-pede and the dragon ...?

It was the site of a bloody battle in the Jinshin War and the battle between the Minamoto and Taira.

The Bridge of Seta, where Tawara Tota met the giant serpent, was a strategically significant position connecting the Capital with the East.

And Mt. Atsukashi, the home of Sarumaro, who joined the battle between the mountain gods, happened to be an old battleground where Minamoto-no-Yoritomo clashed with Fujiwara-no-Yasuhira of Hiraizumi.

I see...

Which may mean that the memories of these actual battles...

may have been dramatized with the large-scale image of the original legend.

Perhaps the impact of the clashing armies was tied to a spectacle straight out of a monster movie...

Speaking of battles, there was the Battle of Kawanakajima in the Warring States period... It happens to be right in between Shiga and Nikko...

W...W AA AU GH !!

Shiga

Yamanashi

That's why I wanted to talk to the leading expert on Warring States history...

And I thought there may be a legend of the centipede and the dragon in Takeda Shingen's territory of Yamanashi.

HELP ME PULL HIM UP!

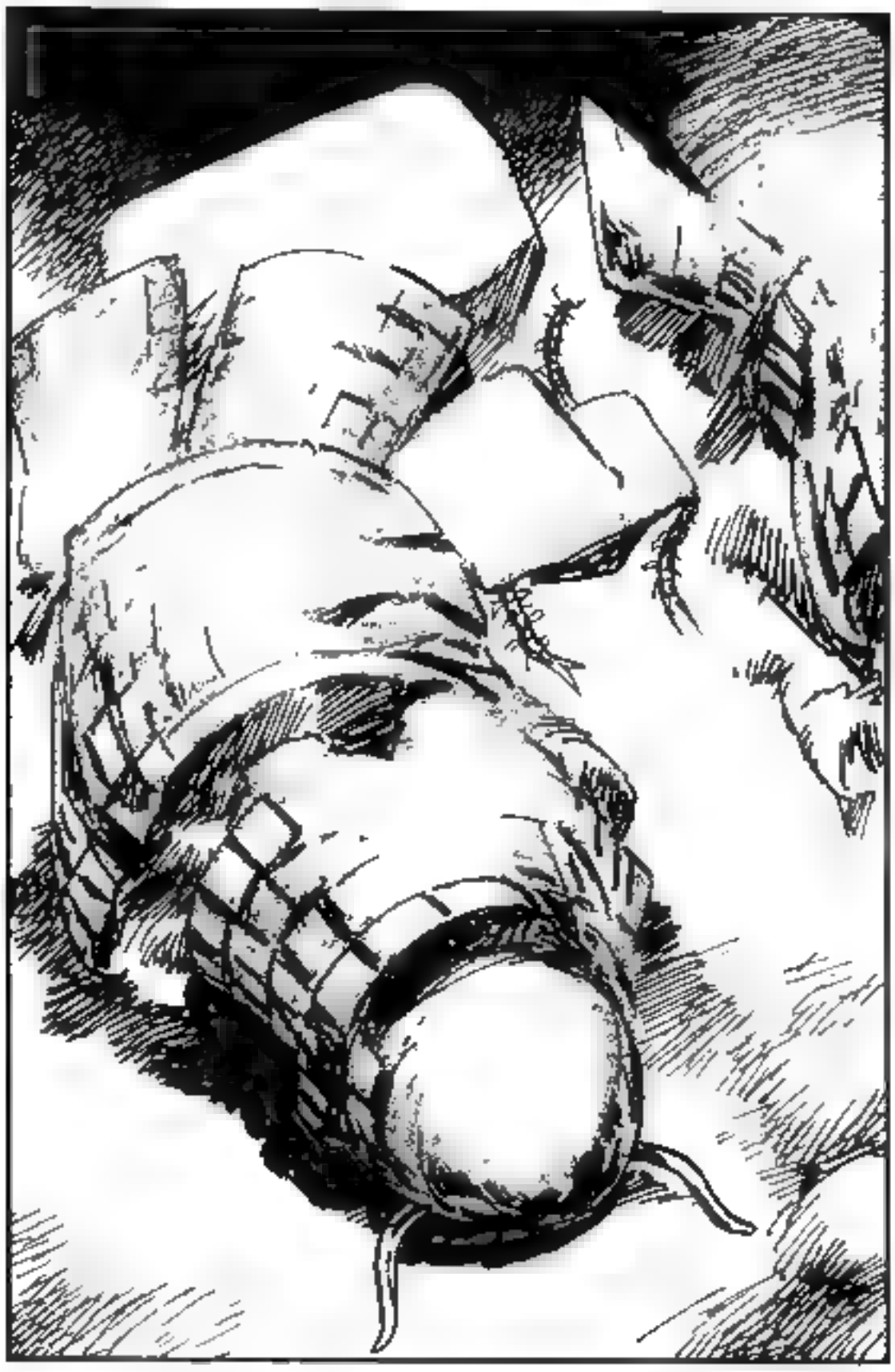
Ow, ow, ow...

THE GROUND GAVE WAY UNDER KAKISAKI'S FEET...

WHAT HAPPENED!?

EEEE EEEK!

Professor, what is this hole...!?



13

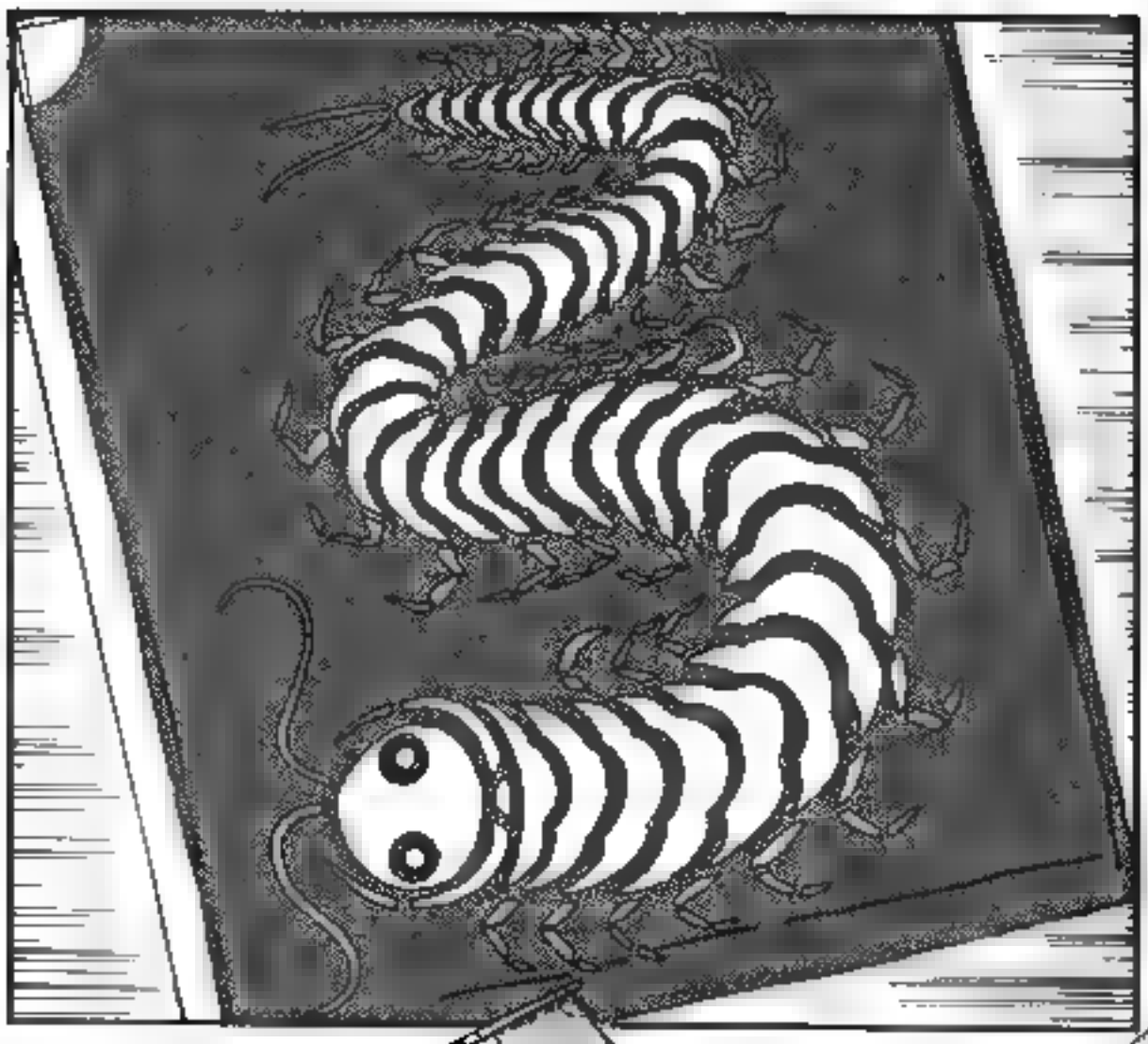
This looks to be the red armor of the Takeda's "Red Guard"...

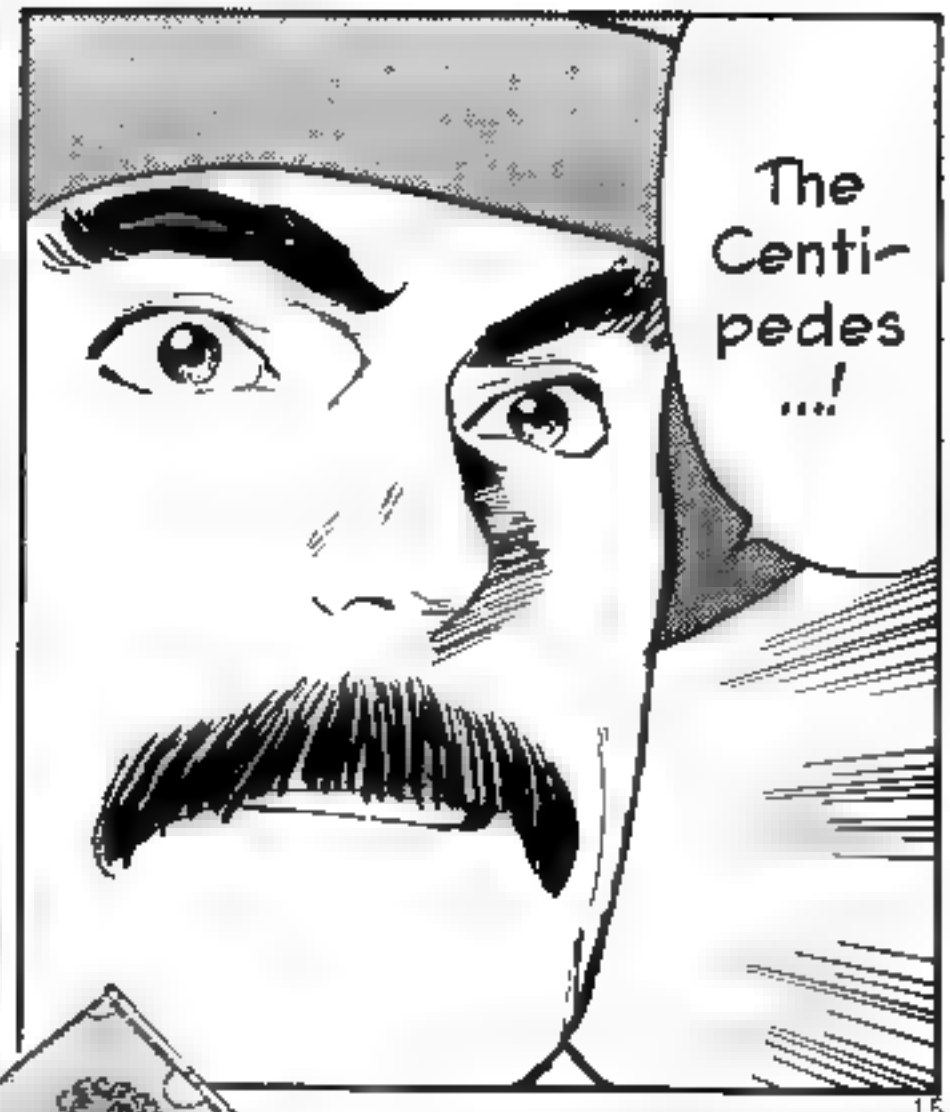
It's a set of armor ?

A great number of gold-miners lived in this town called Kurokawa Sengen, and it appears that they fought for the Takeda Clan in battle.

The gold-miners must have worn these when they joined battle, Professor!

They were known as the "Centipedes" on the battle-ground.





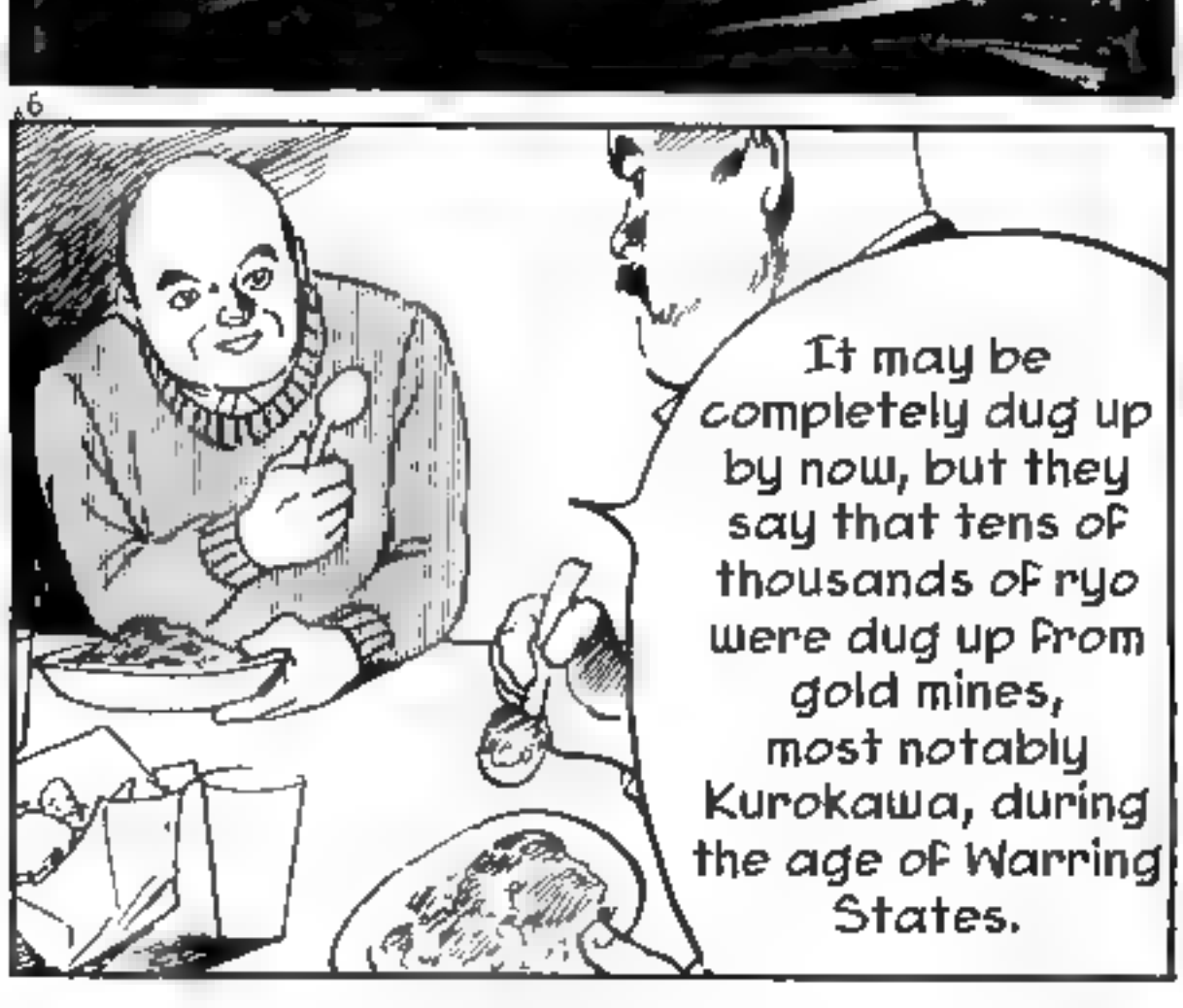
They were an order who were skilled at digging tunnels and repairing underground channels.

They would tunnel under enemy castles, bring water in, or run across the battlefield to transmit messages...

They flourished as the Takeda Army's covert ops.

It's getting dark now. We'll study it tomorrow.

There seems to be some kind of cave deep inside, Professor...



It may be completely dug up by now, but they say that tens of thousands of ryo were dug up from gold mines, most notably Kurokawa, during the age of Warring States.

They apparently called gold veins "centipedes", since their black vertical streaks in the white quartz layer looked like centipede tracks.

I see...

Due to their good omens, centipedes were a sacred insect to them... They may have considered them to be their guardian deities.

They were a pair of copper centipedes, and they still remain there to this day.

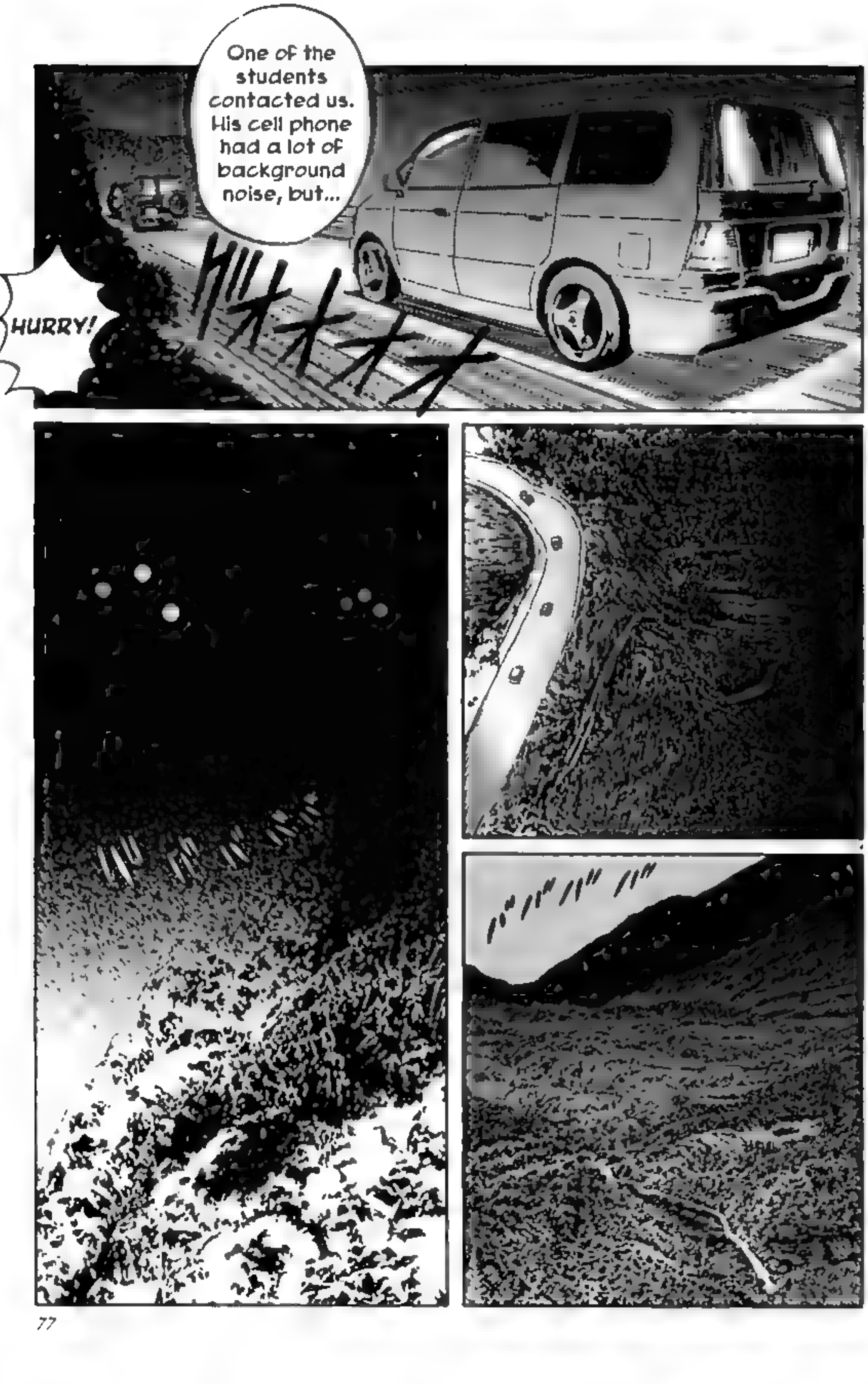
When natural copper was first discovered in Japan in the 8th century, the Imperial Court rejoiced, and bestowed a memorial item to Hijiri Shrine in Chichibu.

So Professor Munakata, what about this battle between the Centipede and the Dragon....!?

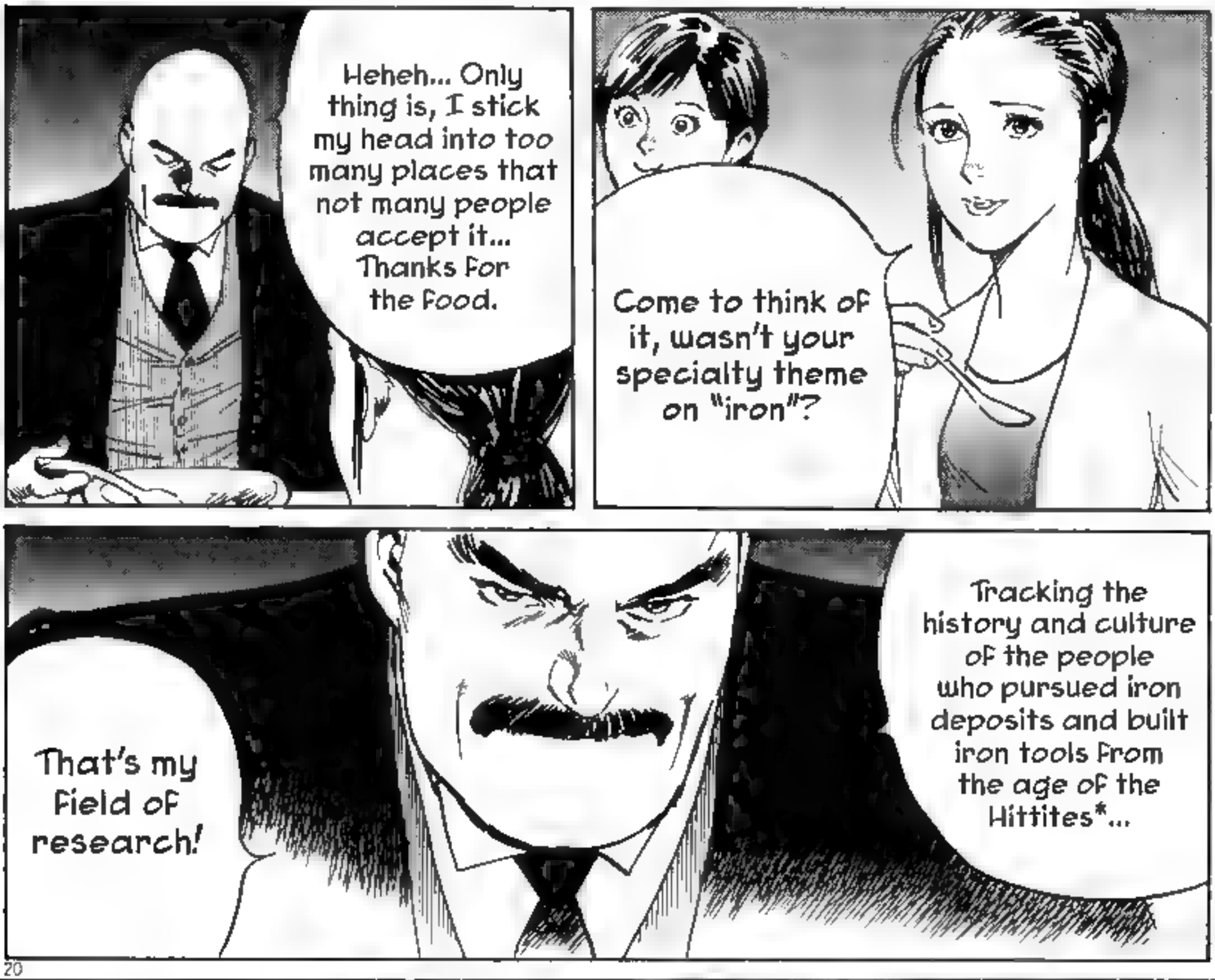
This proves that groups that mined for gold and copper deep in the mountains considered the centipede to be their symbol since ancient times.

山梨県
Yamanashi Prefecture
丹波山村
Tabayama Village

...THEY'VE DISCOV-ERED THE RED GUARD ARMOR!


One of the students contacted us. His cell phone had a lot of background noise, but...
HURRY!

*Used horses and iron tools to build a kingdom in Asia Minor in the 18th Century BCE
Once had a massive empire, but they declined in the 12th Century BCE


Heheh... Only thing is, I stick my head into too many places that not many people accept it... Thanks For the Food.
Come to think of it, wasn't your specialty theme on "iron"?
That's my field of research!
Tracking the history and culture of the people who pursued iron deposits and built iron tools From the age of the Hittites*...

Both iron and precious metals are smelted with fire, but in Japan's case, most of the raw materials were "iron sand", rather than iron ore.

Iron sand that accumulated in rivers and shores, granulated iron clods...

2.

This means that the majority of iron was taken from near water.

They also had a method of cutting into a mountain, and washing the sediment in the river to sort the iron sand.

By lakes and ponds, they used an iron composite called limonite, which would be attached to plant roots.

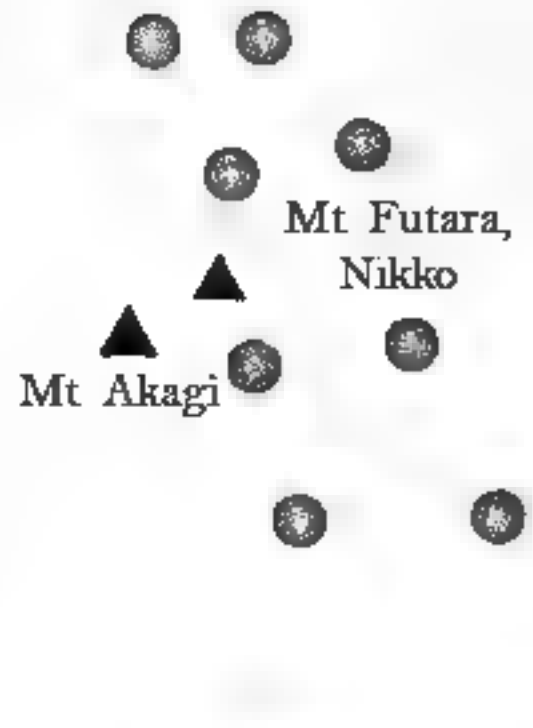
.....

Since ancient times, water was believed to be the territory of dragons and serpents.

I would not be surprised if people who gathered iron sand considered the dragon to symbolize their order!

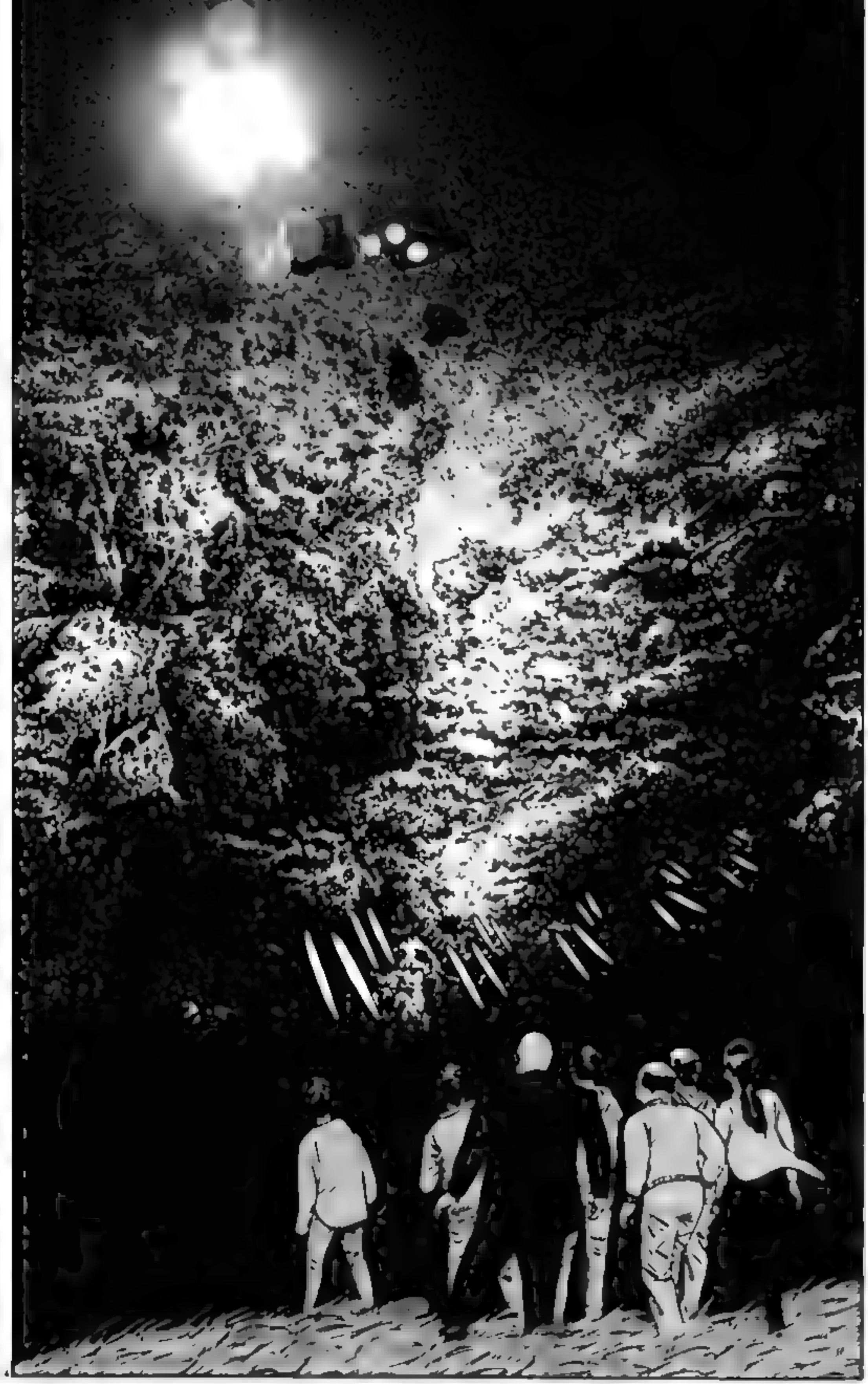
South of Lake Biwa, there is the Mt. Osaka iron manufacturing ruins group, while Mt. Mikami has copper and iron mines.

Meanwhile, there are a number of iron manufacturing ruins in the Nikko area, but at the same time it's a copper mining region represented by Mt. Ashio.



There may have been some form of trouble and strife between the group that excavated copper and other precious metals From the mountains and the group that gathered iron by water.

So a secret Feud over metals may be the true nature behind the legend of the Centipede and the Dragon.



PROFESSOR TATSUNAMI! THEY'RE COMING FROM BELOW US, TOO!

OKAY! YOU'RE GOOD!

TV... FILMING ...!?

Hi, we're with Toou TV! We're going to start filming here...

"Seeking Takeda Shingen's Buried Treasure".

It's a special program where we actually dig up the gold led by the historical researcher Imibe Shoichiro.

EEP ...

Seems that I always run into you in the strangest places, Imibe...

M... MUNA-KATA...!?

He's no more than a man who brings his dubious stories into the TV station to churn them into hoax programs.

Nothing good ever happens when he's involved.

You know him, Professor Munakata ...?

The "historical researcher" title is an entire joke...

W...WHAT THE HELL!? YOU'RE JUST AS MUCH OF A NUISANCE OF THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY, WITH ALL YOUR OUTLANDISH HYPOTHESES!

Explain yourself! What's all this commotion!? And what's this about the Takeda's buried treasure!?

You say this is an archive written by an Edo-period miner?

Takeda's Secret Notes

This clearly reveals the location of the vast quantities of gold hidden by the Takeda Clan.

I bought it off an old man for five million yen... Of course, the TV station fronted half of it...

Look!

I'll bet you're insinuating that I've been ripped off!

But no one's discovered the entrance to the hiding place.

Only five million yen for the location of vast quantities of gold?

HUH ...!?

3.

It says that three suits* of the Takeda's Red Guard stand watch over the entrance!

That's just what you discovered today!!

I FOUND IT! IT'S RIGHT HERE!

*Suits Refers to armor

How did you know about that...!?

.....

N...NO DOUBT ABOUT IT! THERE'S THREE RED GUARD!

My brother's a friend with one of the staff members, and he told me that if I excavated any sets of armor; he wanted to report on it...

I didn't know it would be such a fuss.

I'm sorry, I called them...

PROFESSOR TATSUNAMI OF FURIN UNIVERSITY IS CONDUCTING AN ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION! YOU'LL RUIN THE GOLD-MINERS' LIVING QUARTERS!

YOU WANT TO DIG IT UP WITH HEAVY MACHIN-ERY!?

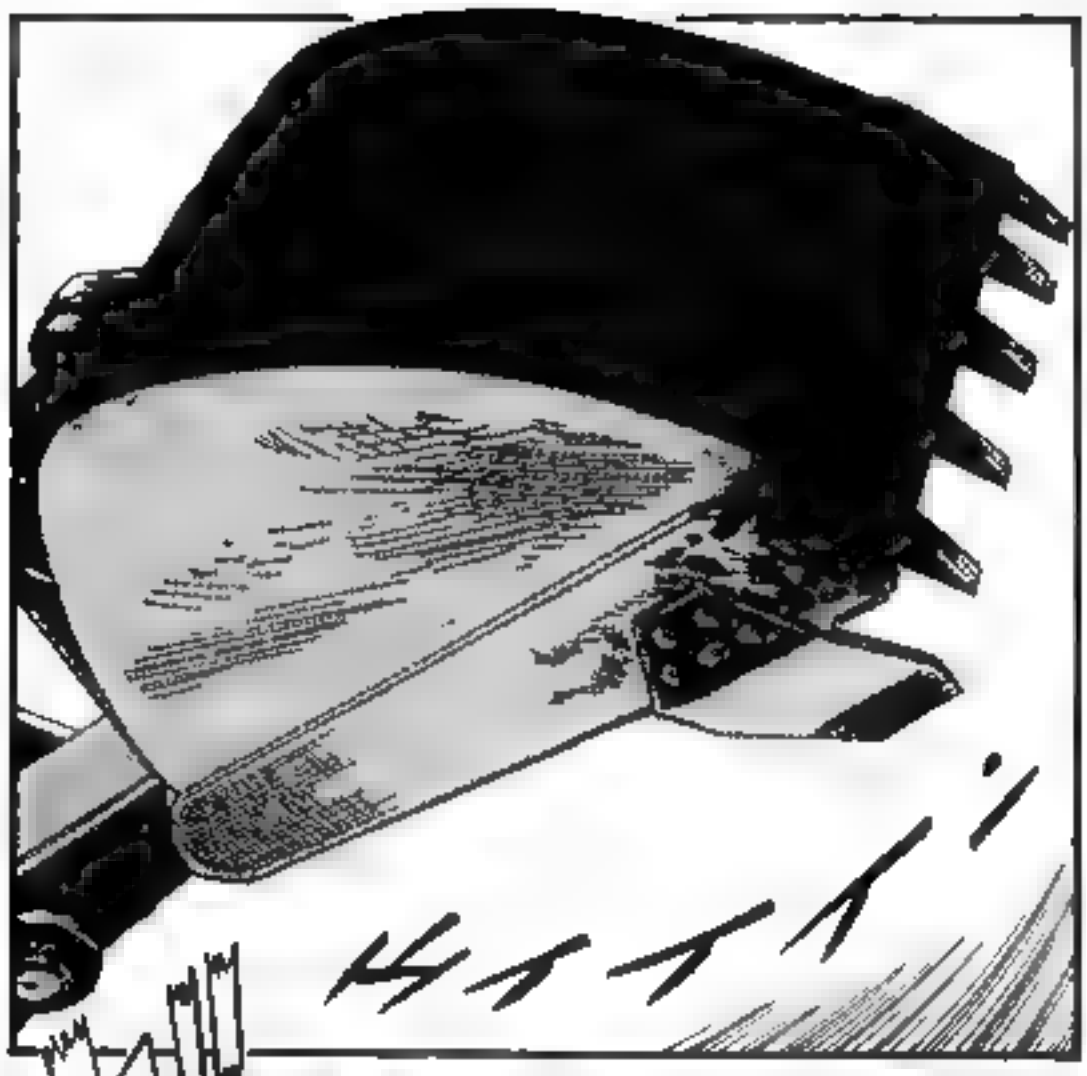
Toou TV already discussed this with Tokyo Waterworks and the Yamanashi Prefectural Office!

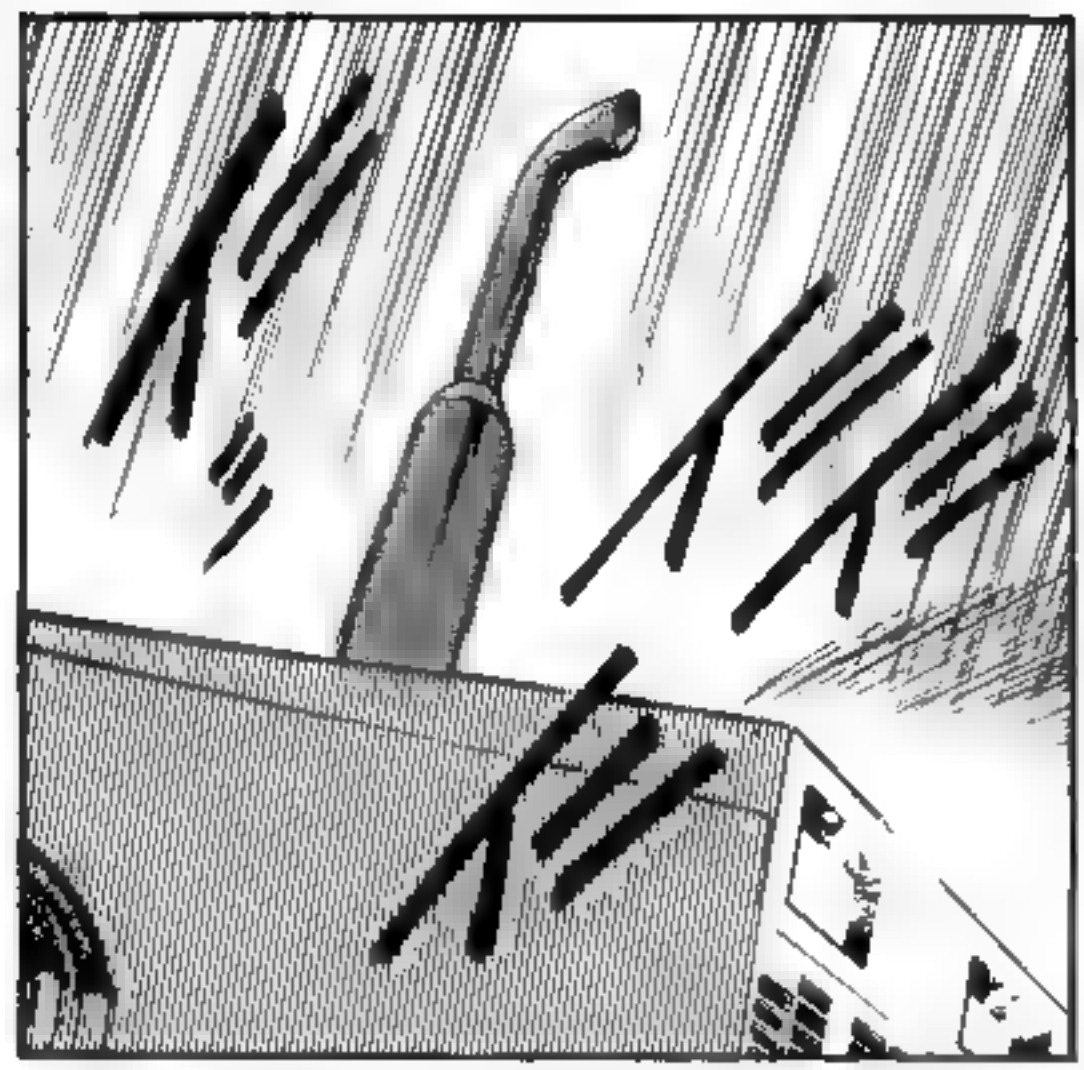
We already have authori-zation! Look...

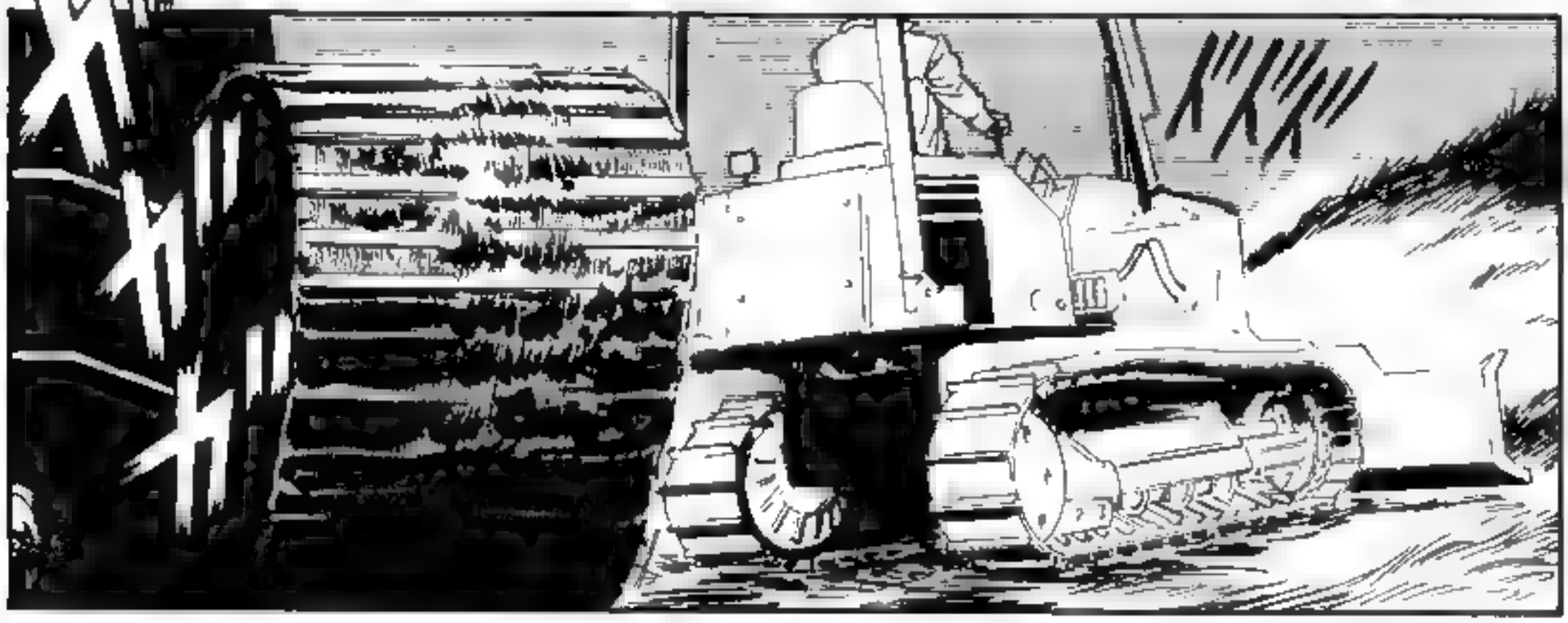
33

You can feel free to dispute it. It's Friday today, and we'll be done our excavation by the time they reopen on Monday.

AND I'LL BET YOU DIDN'T DISCLOSE THAT IT WOULD RUN INTO AN ACADEMIC STUDY! BE-SIDES, WE'RE THE ONES WHO DISCOVERED THAT HOLE!







D... DON'T MOVE THEM!
Move it! You'll break them!

Now, is the Takeda's gold really buried in the in the gold-miners' residence of Kurokawa, Yamanashi?

And this archive says that the vast quantities of "Kai Gold" is stored there!

This cavern guarded by three sets of armor connects to an old tunnel, which leads to an underground cave...

Kai Gold... The currency minted in Kai supported the Takeda Army, said to be the mightiest army of the Warring States...

八幡大菩薩

軍地藏大菩薩

八幡大菩薩

軍地藏大菩薩

Led though they were by the fierce general Takeda Shingen, a war chest funded by something other than agricultural harvests was an absolute must for them to keep fighting from the mountainous province of Kai.

At the end of the day, the strength of the feudal lords was backed by their financial power.

Uesugi

Oda

Takeda

Tokugawa

Hojo

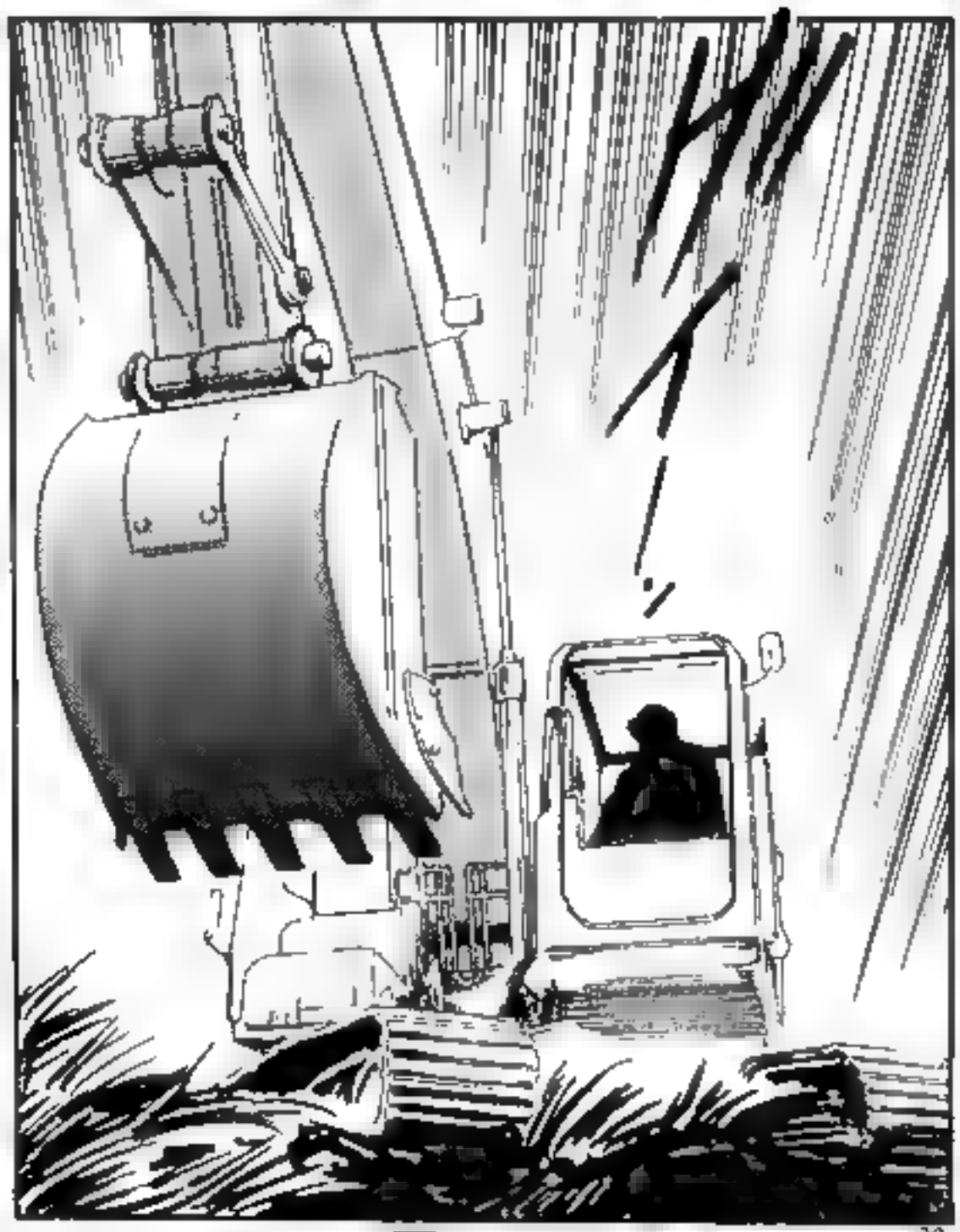
However ...

As long as they had "gold", they could raise their forces, buy guns, and based on the circumstances, even bribe their enemies to defect.

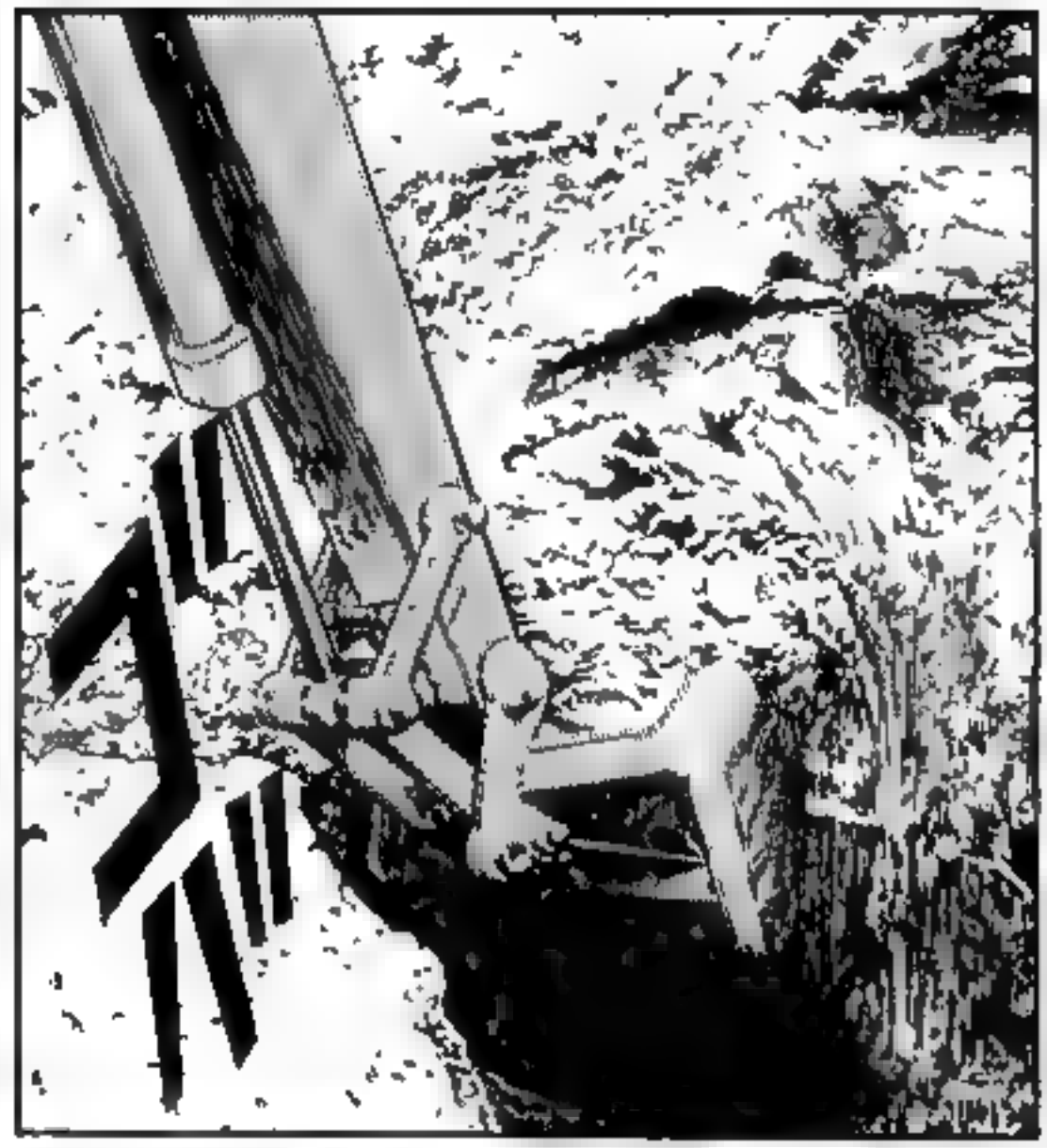
Even the great gold mines of Kai began to dwindle in their output in the latter half of Shingen's reign, until they were all dug up...

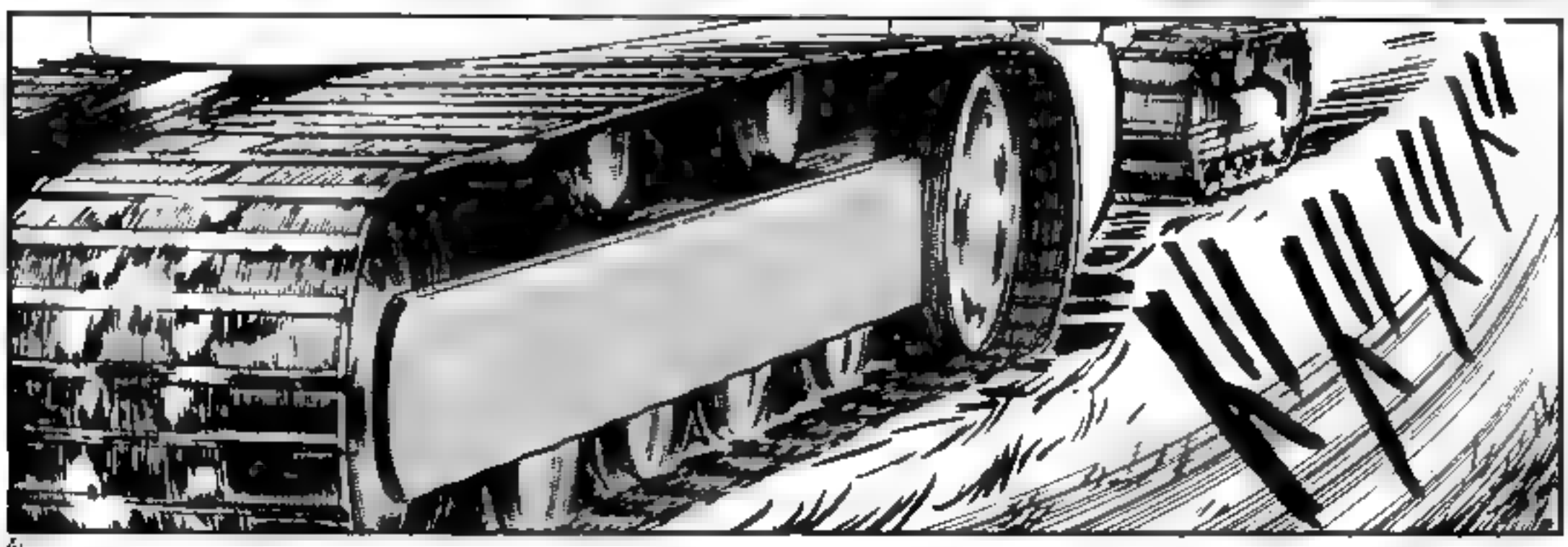
And with the military funds depleted, the Takeda army was destroyed.

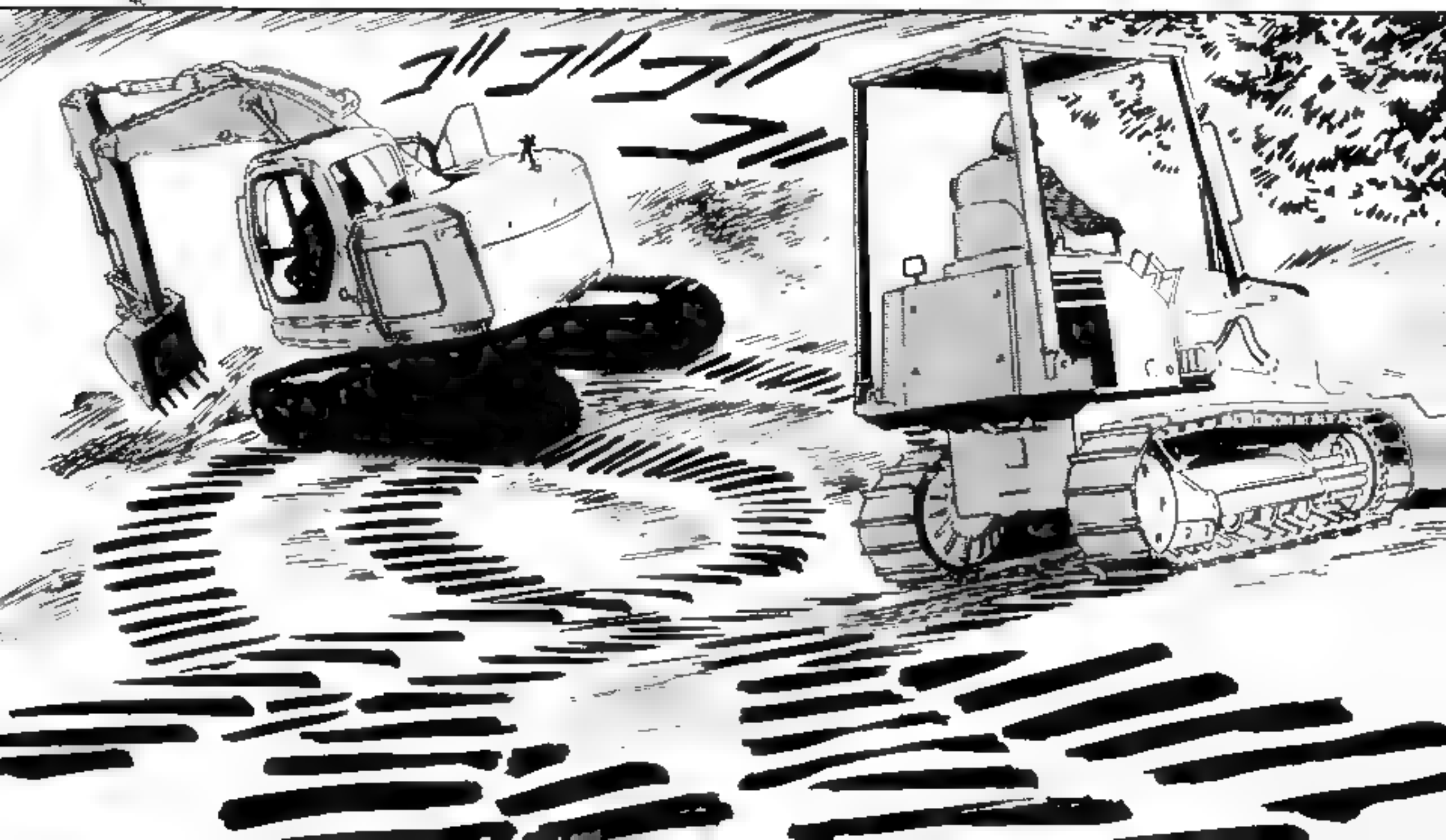
Based on this historical fact, Shingen hid tens of thousands of ryo to prepare for the future... according to this archive...



39

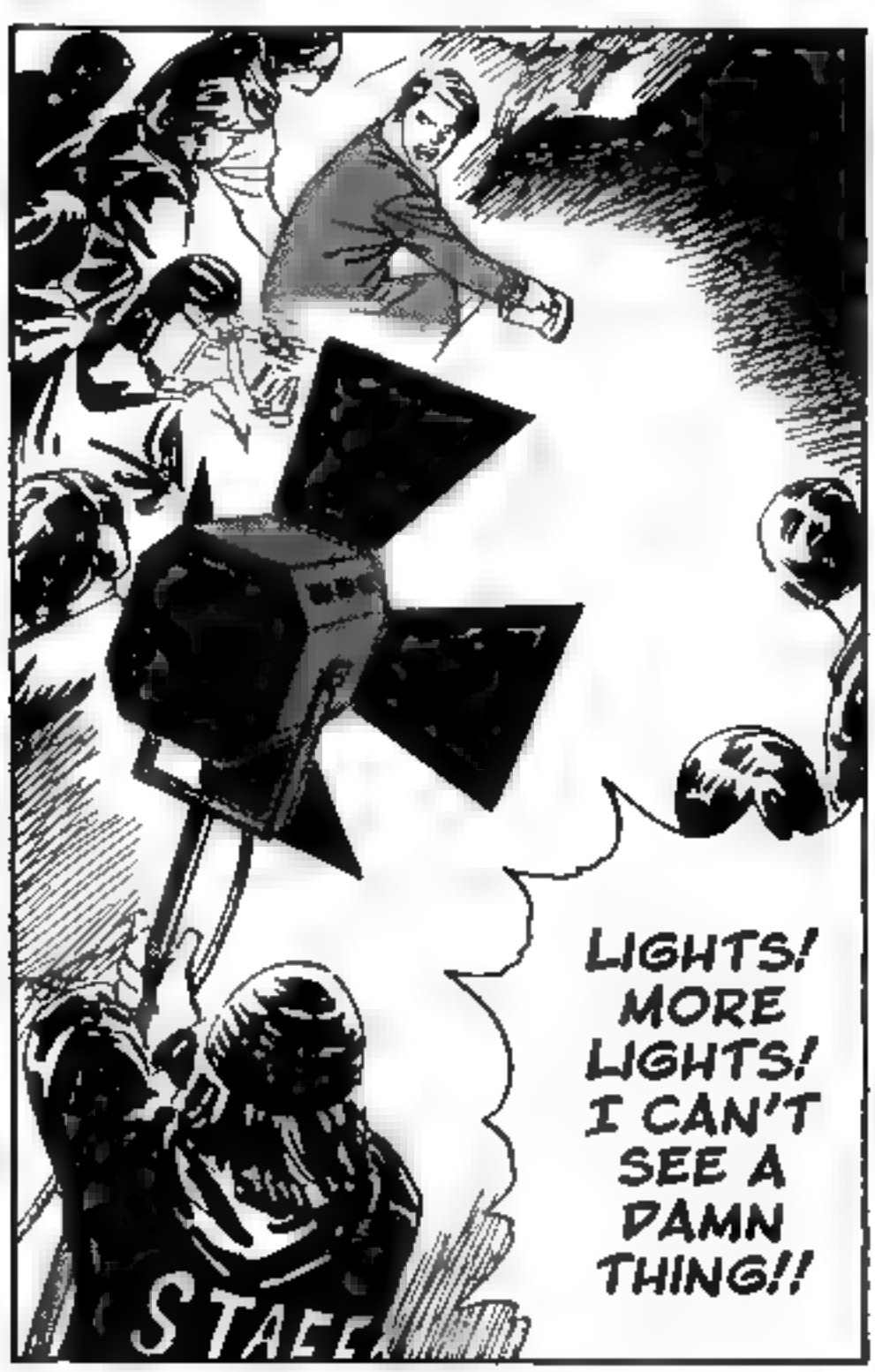


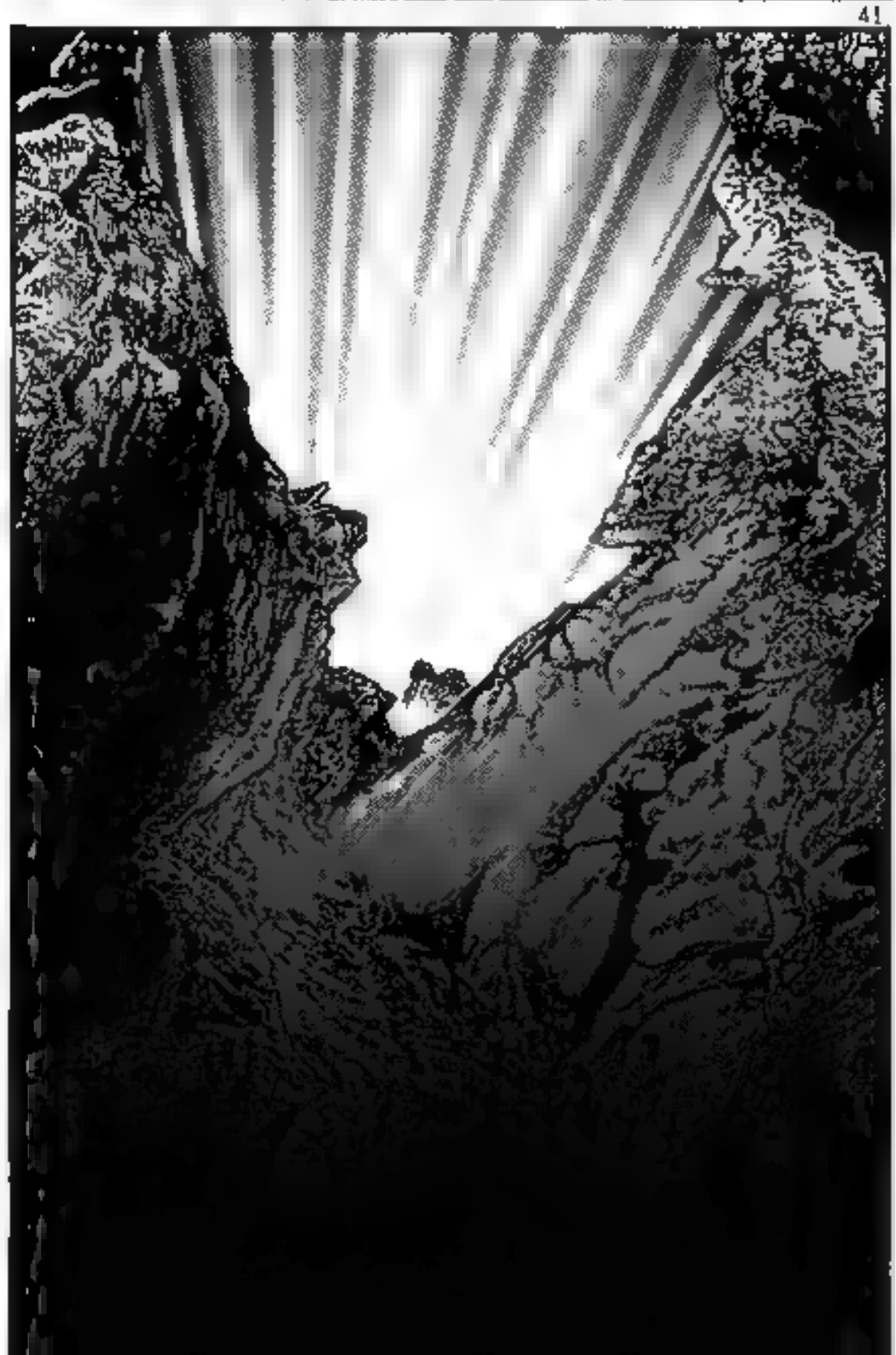




Do you see anything!? Do you see the "gold"!?
Noth-ing...

GIVE ME THAT! IT'S AN OLD TUNNEL! LOOKS LIKE IT GOES ALL THE WAY TO THE BOTTOM OF THE CLIFF!


LIGHTS! MORE LIGHTS! I CAN'T SEE A DAMN THING!!



WHAT ARE YOU DOING, YOU MORONS !?

!

THE GENE-RATOR...!?

K", K", K..

♪

The engine's acting up...

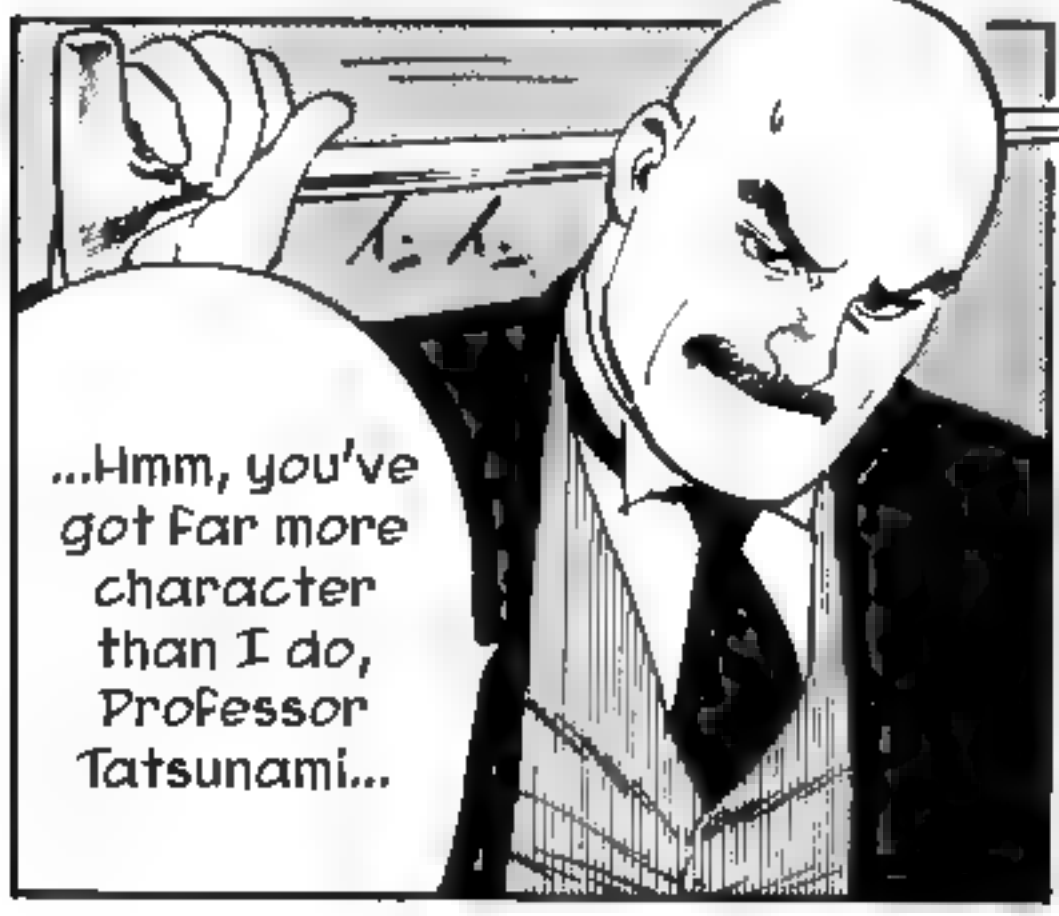
...Well, we don't have much choice. Let's wait for morning and start shooting then...

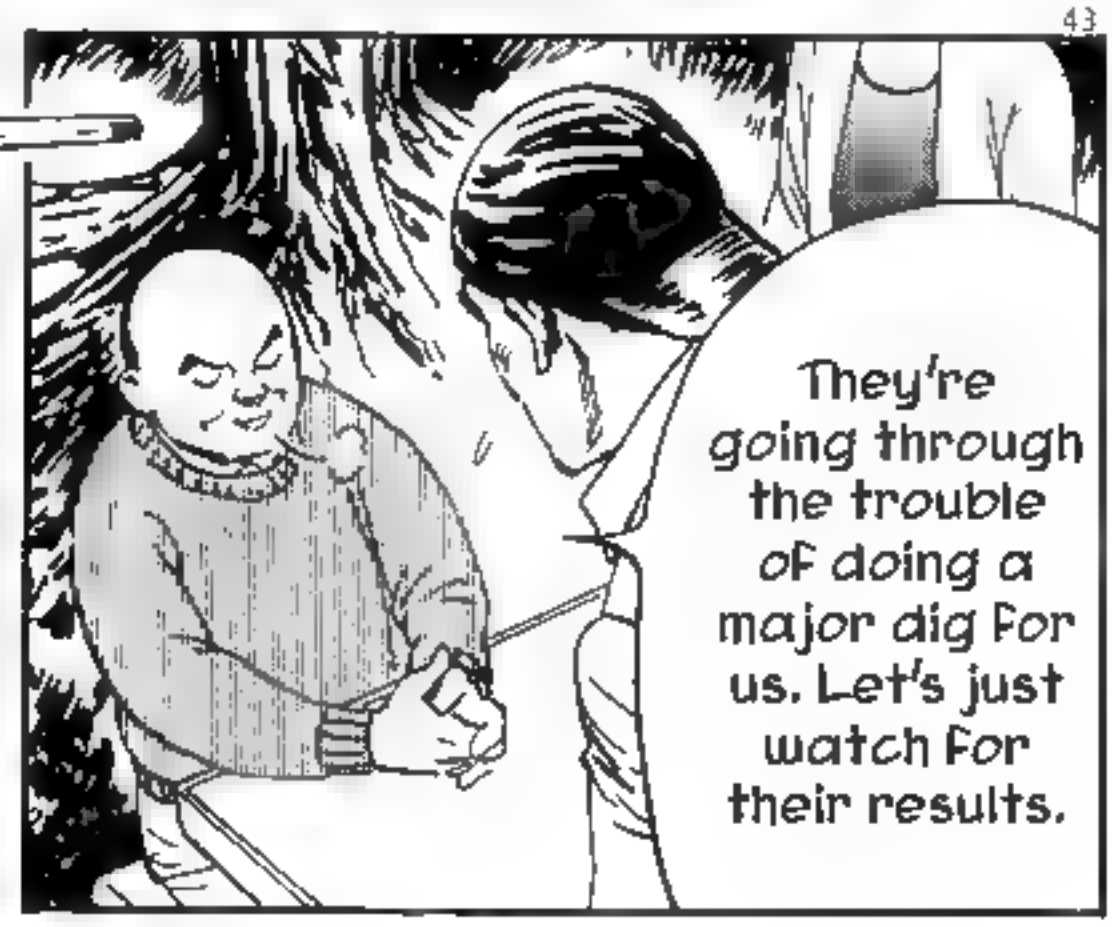
I know already! I'm not moving till morning!
Mr Imibe! It's too dark down there! It's dangerous!

Dammit ...!

But Dad, now we can't continue our study. What do we do...?

It's alright. Don't let it get to you.
I'm sorry, this is all my fault...


...Hmm, you've got far more character than I do, Professor Tatsunami...


They're going through the trouble of doing a major dig for us. Let's just watch for their results.

Then his eyes would have naturally turned to the gold mines of other territories.

...Incidentally, if the gold mine was depleted during Shingen's lifetime, as Imibe says...

Goldmines of Echigo

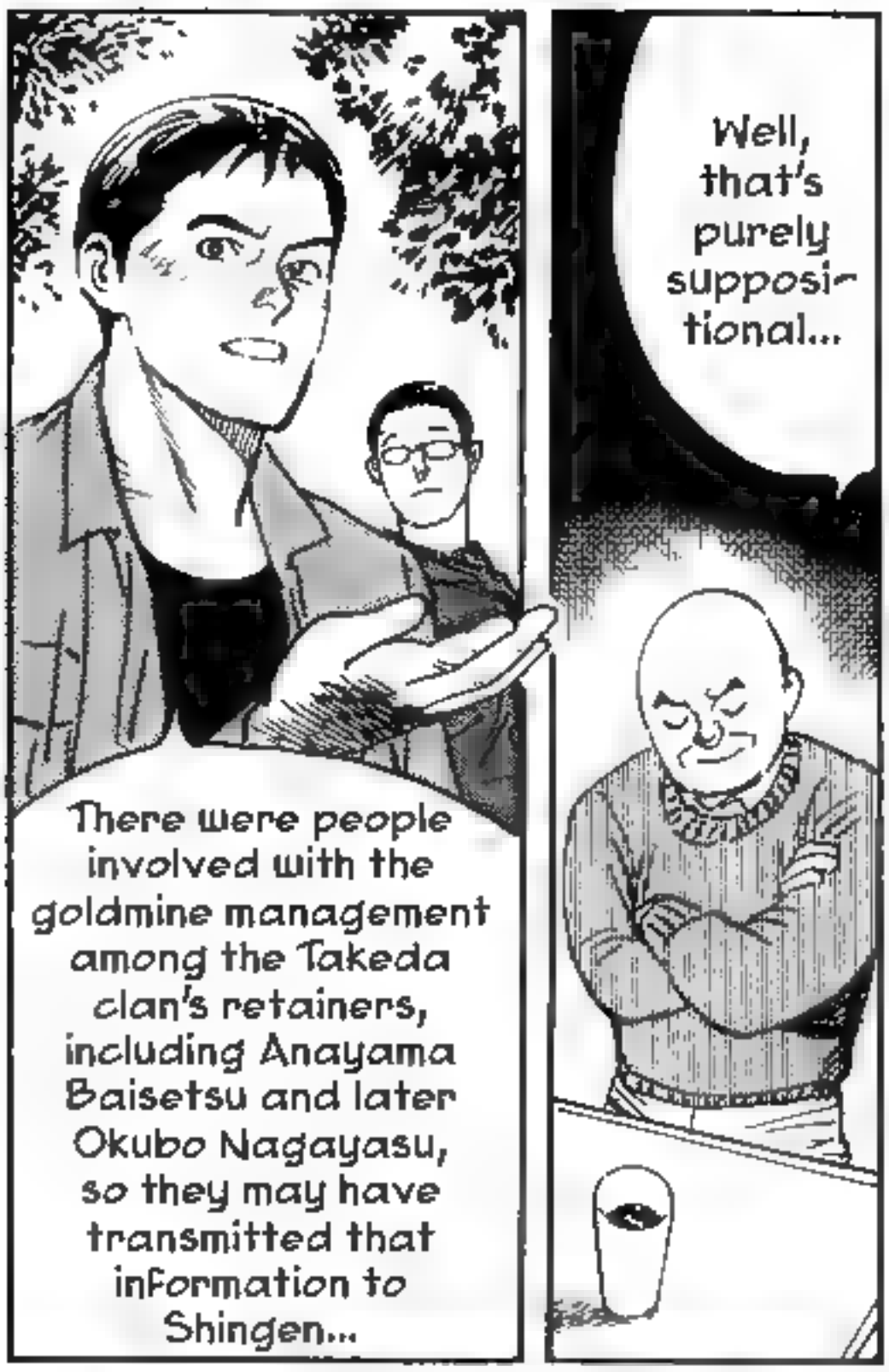
Uesugi Kenshin

Takeda Shingen

Was the Takeda vs. Uesugi War a clash over gold...?

The territory of Echigo, belonging to Shingen's fatal foe Uesugi Kenshin, possessed the goldmine of Sado Island.

That's far too simple. The goldmine of Sado wasn't developed until a later period, plus we don't know how good a grasp Shingen had of Echigo's goldmines...


There were people involved with the goldmine management among the Takeda clan's retainers, including Anayama Baisetsu and later Okubo Nagayasu, so they may have transmitted that information to Shingen...
Well, that's purely supposi-tional...
The gold-miners, with the Centipede as their guardian deity, may have had an extensive information network. Perhaps they would have secretly gained word about any promising veins?

Whoa, whoa, not you, too, Yae...
Speaking in the extreme, it would be possible if one of the gold-miners was an associate of Shingen's, who was powerful enough to influence strategy...

But From a Folkloristics perspective, there was a man of interest among Shingen's associates!
I'm not Imibe, so it's not my intention to stick my nose beyond my area of expertise...

There is an ancient legend in Japan about a one-eyed, one-legged monster that lives deep in the mountains.

W...Who was that!?

Meanwhile, in Japanese mythology, the god Amanomahitotsu-no-Kami is said to have one eye, and he is the god of blacksmiths and refiners.

Its name varies upon the place: One-Eyed Kid, One-Eyed Priest, One-Legged Datara...

Interestingly enough, in Greek mythology, Hephaestus, the god of fire and blacksmiths, was crippled in one leg,

and the giants who assisted him, known as Cyclops, were one-eyed.

In fact, there were many people who lost an eye in this profession until modern times.

Now, to say nothing of the gold-miners, people who process gold had a tendency to injure their eyes from the heat or sparks, from constantly looking into the furnace.

It's the origin of the phrase "treading the Tatara", and because they continuously stepped on the bellows with one leg, many of them injured their knee joints...

Also, they had to consistently blow air on the fire from the bellows to keep it hot. This was called "Tatara-blowing".

A one-eyed man with a crippled leg...

Does that bring anyone among the Takeda's retainers to mind?

They may have seen such people living in the mountains, and exaggerated their image to give rise to the legends and mythology we are familiar with today.

In other words, ever since ancient times, losing an eye and crippling a leg may have been a common industrial hazard among people involved in metal since ancient times.

Ahh...

Shingen's legendary strategist... Yamamoto Kansuke!

The Takeda's "Centipedes" were entrusted with engineering tactics during sieges, and were also ordered to relay information.

If the tactician Yamamoto Kansuke was the leader of these Centipedes .. then he was the perfect man for gathering information and devising strategy.

Having originally moved from moun tain to mountain in search of metal veins, they must have had their own information network that crossed provincial borders.

50

If the gold mines of Kai were depleted, the Takeda's war chest would run out and they would fight no longer... Then they had no choice but to obtain new gold mines!

And he likely had obtained information about veins in other provinces, particularly the promising gold mines in the Uesugi's domain of Echigo!

The invasion of Echigo... Shingen only set his mind on this plan because Kansuke was the tactician!

And that's why he so persistently repeated the "Battle of Kawanakajima", which broke out five times over twelve years.

The most famous and greatest battle of the Warring States was the Fourth Battle of Kawanakajima, which broke out in September of Eiroku year 4, in the morning mist

THE ONLY THINGS BURIED HERE ARE MINING TOOLS AND RUB-BISH!

Dammit ...!

I guess it's all a hoax...

W...WE CAN'T GIVE UP YET!

.....

WE NEED THE HEAVY MACHINERY! CALL THE OPERATORS!

Roger!

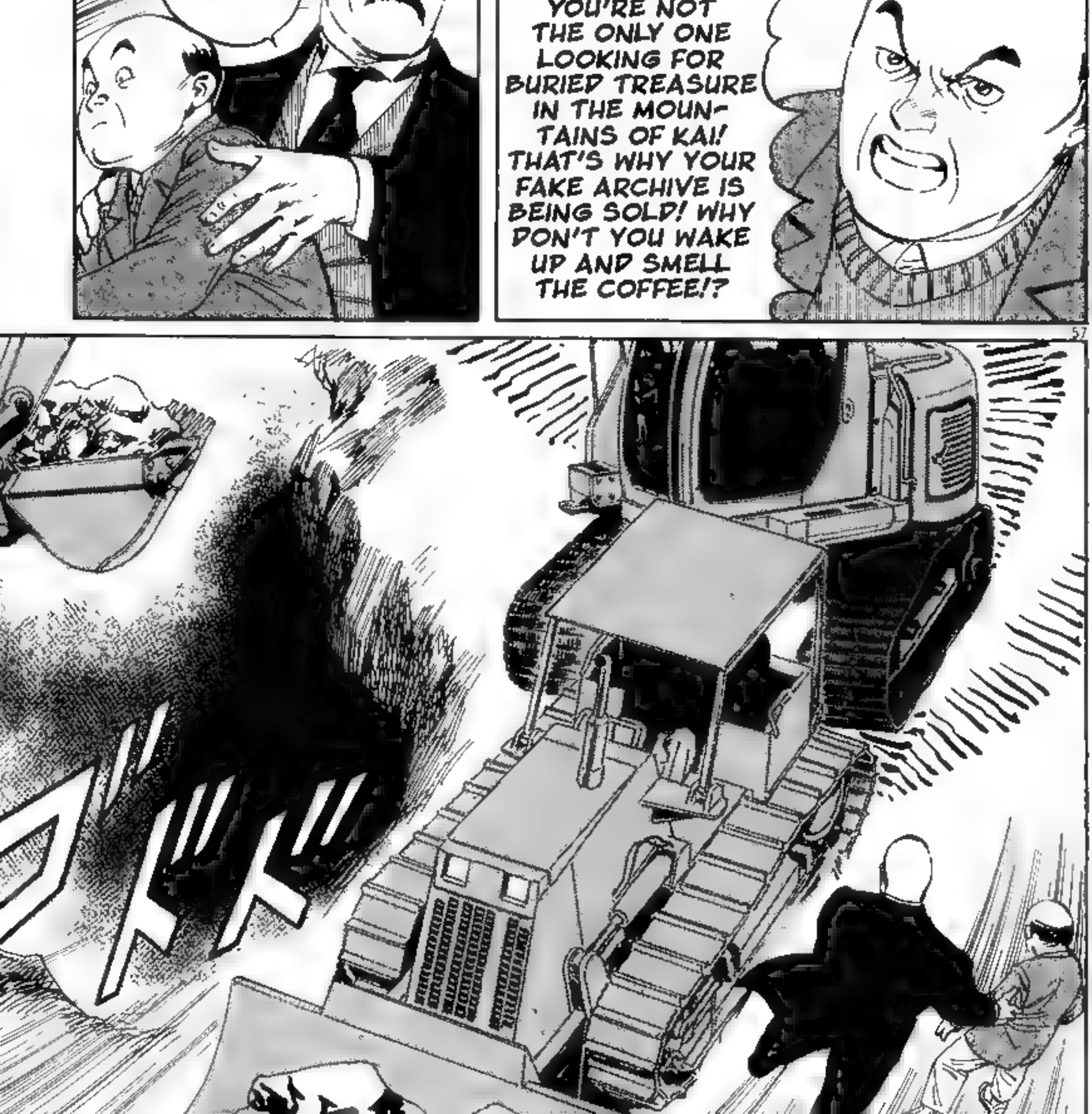
DIG UP MORE DIRT! THE TUNNEL MAY HAVE BEEN BURIED!

ブルブル

ブルブルブル

WHERE'S YOUR BURIED TREASURE, IMIBE!? HAVEN'T YOU RAV-AGED THIS SITE ENOUGH!?

Move it!
Hey, you! The ruins of the gold mine are practically infested with caverns! It's too risky to keep those heavy machines operating over them!
Professor Tatsunami!
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE LOOKING FOR BURIED TREASURE IN THE MOUN-TAINS OF KAI! THAT'S WHY YOUR FAKE ARCHIVE IS BEING SOLD! WHY DON'T YOU WAKE UP AND SMELL THE COFFEE!?


57

But Uesugi Kenshin saw through this scheme, and used the thick mist to press in on Shingen first.

Yamamoto Kansuke's tactic, known as the "Woodpecker Tactic", involved attacking the Uesugi army on Mt. Saijo from behind with a detachment, chasing them down to Kawanakajima, where Shingen's main forced awaited.

ドドド

Attacking the unguarded Takeda army, the Uesugi army commenced their all-out assault, brandishing their banner of the "Suspended Chaotic Dragon"...This was a clash of two main forces rarely seen in the history of battle

掠疾如風徐不
乾'
乾'

Hmpf! They've almost completely ruined the investigation area!

Huh?

Kakisaki, would you mind trying to contact the lower realm with your cell phone again?

63

62

It truly was a recreation of the battle of the Centipede and the Dragon.

One could say that it was a battle over metal.

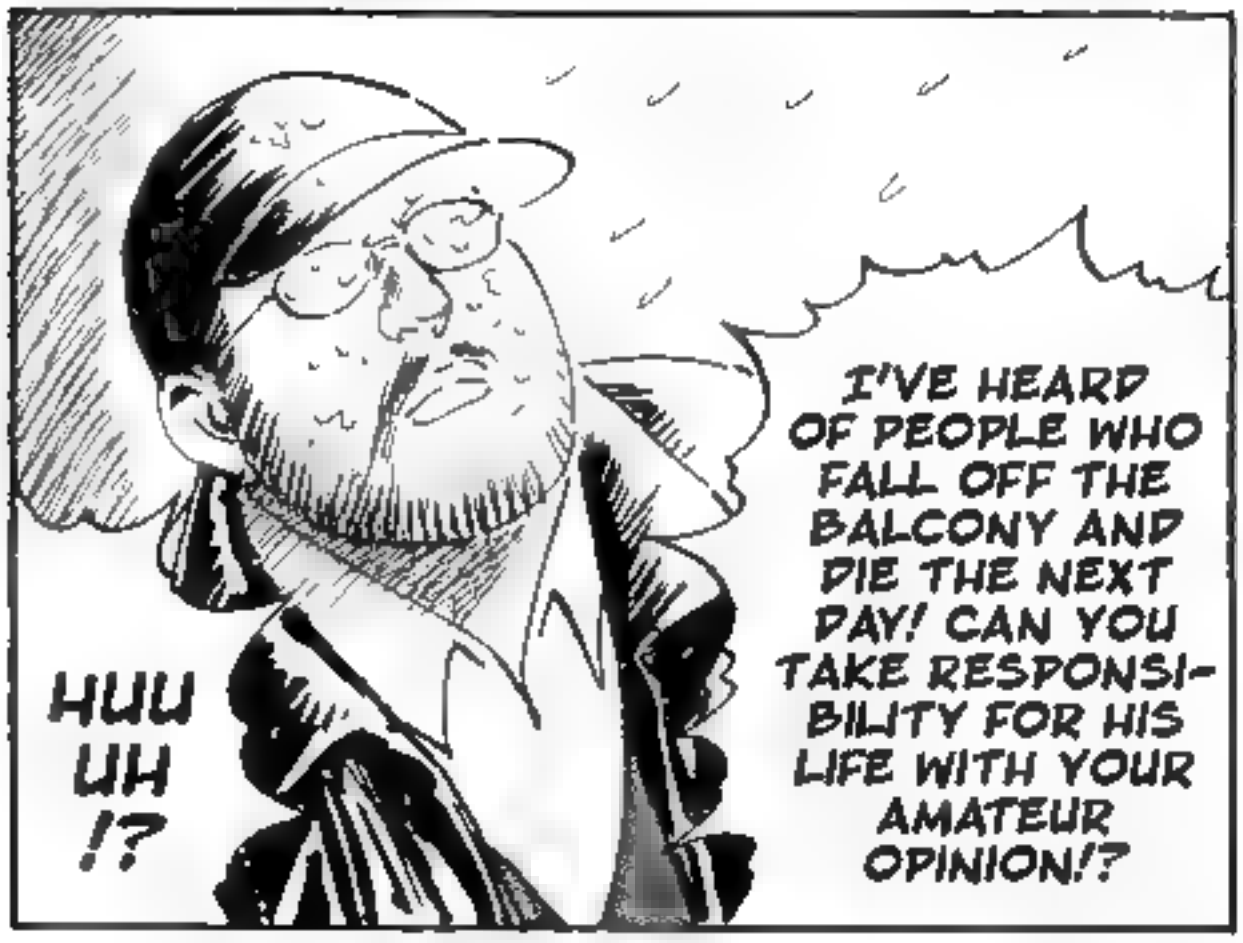
When he realized his all or nothing plan had failed, Yamamoto Kansuke the tactician plunged into the enemy camp ..

WAAA AAAA AAAA UGH!!

W...WA AAAAU GH...

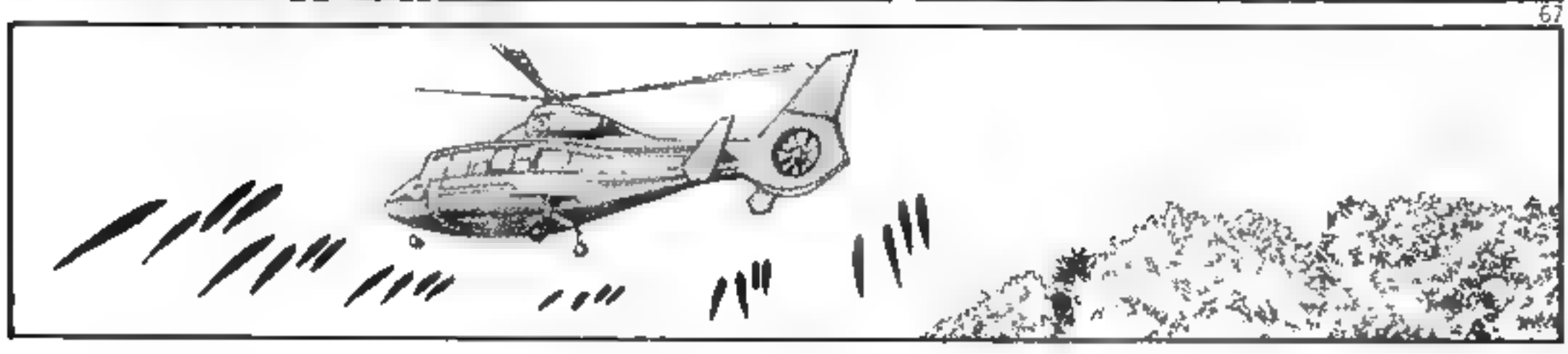
……
CALL THE FIRE STATION, AND REQUEST AN EMERGENCY HELICOPTER!

GIVE ME A HAND!

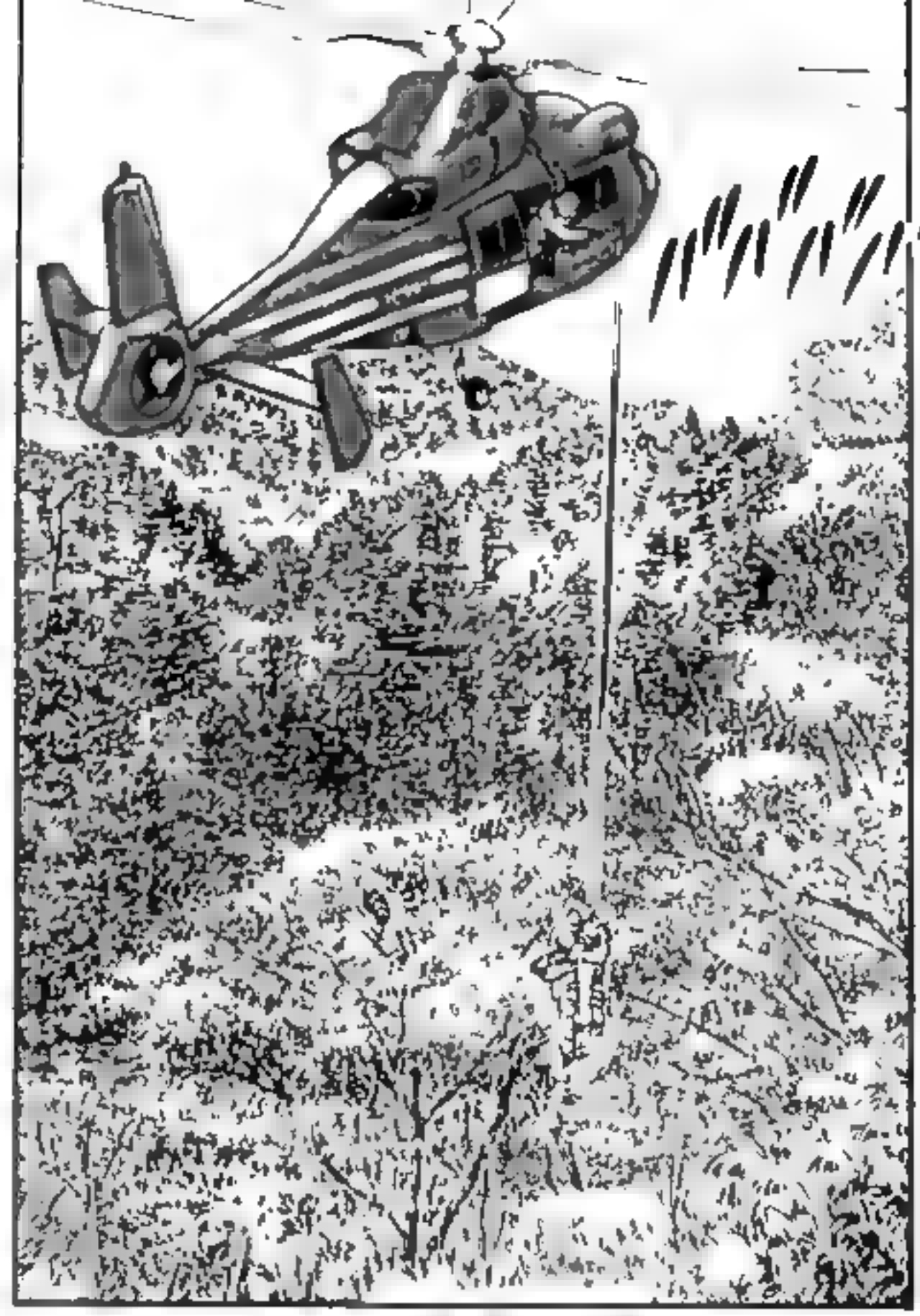

I'VE HEARD OF PEOPLE WHO FALL OFF THE BALCONY AND DIE THE NEXT DAY! CAN YOU TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS LIFE WITH YOUR AMATEUR OPINION!?
HUU UH !?

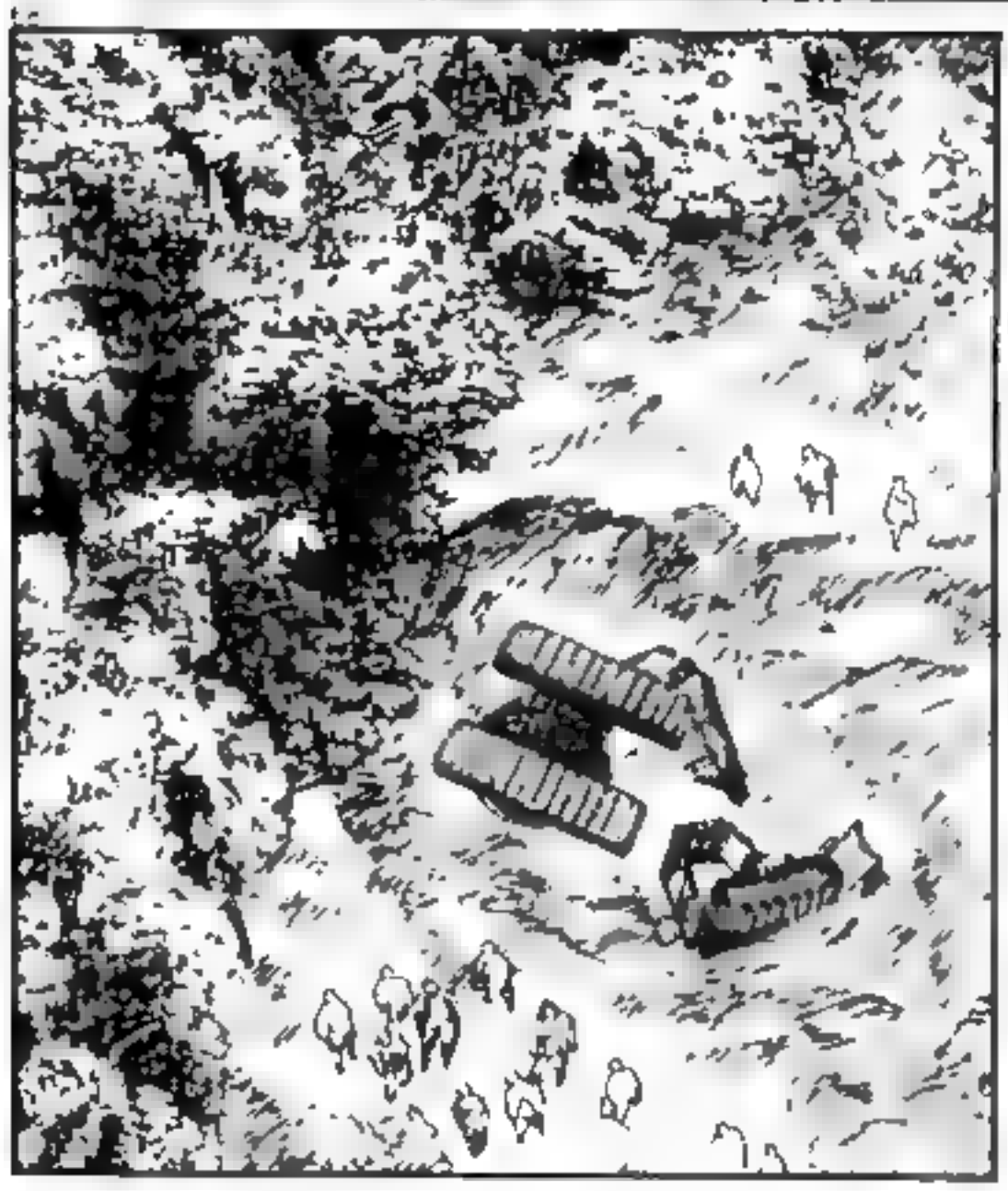
H...He doesn't look that injured! We can take him to the hospital by car...

67



There's some other TV stations here, too.
Oh, look. We've got a helicopter from the local newspaper here, too. I wonder if someone called them.





If we'd ended it with "Even though nothing turned up, the gold is still down there, somewhere..." the network would have given us the green light...
This is really bad, Mr. Imibe.
I EVEN PAID OUT OF MY OWN POCKET !!
But we already used up so much of our budget!
But we'll lose all our sponsors if the world knows we used force and got people injured!
Tch! This is getting out of hand...
RETREAT !!
IS IT TRUE THAT YOU RUINED FURIN UNIVERSITY'S INVESTIGATION!?
WHERE'S THE ACCIDENT? WHO'S BEEN INJURED !?

SO DID YOU FIND THE BURIED TREAS-URE!?

RE-TREAT!

RETREAT !!

YOU'LL HURT YOURSELF ONE DAY! GOT THAT!?

I HOPE YOU'VE LEARNED YOUR LESSON NOT TO BARGE IN ON PEOPLE'S TERRITORY, IMIBE!

.....

I covered him in as much spit as I could! Hahhahha!

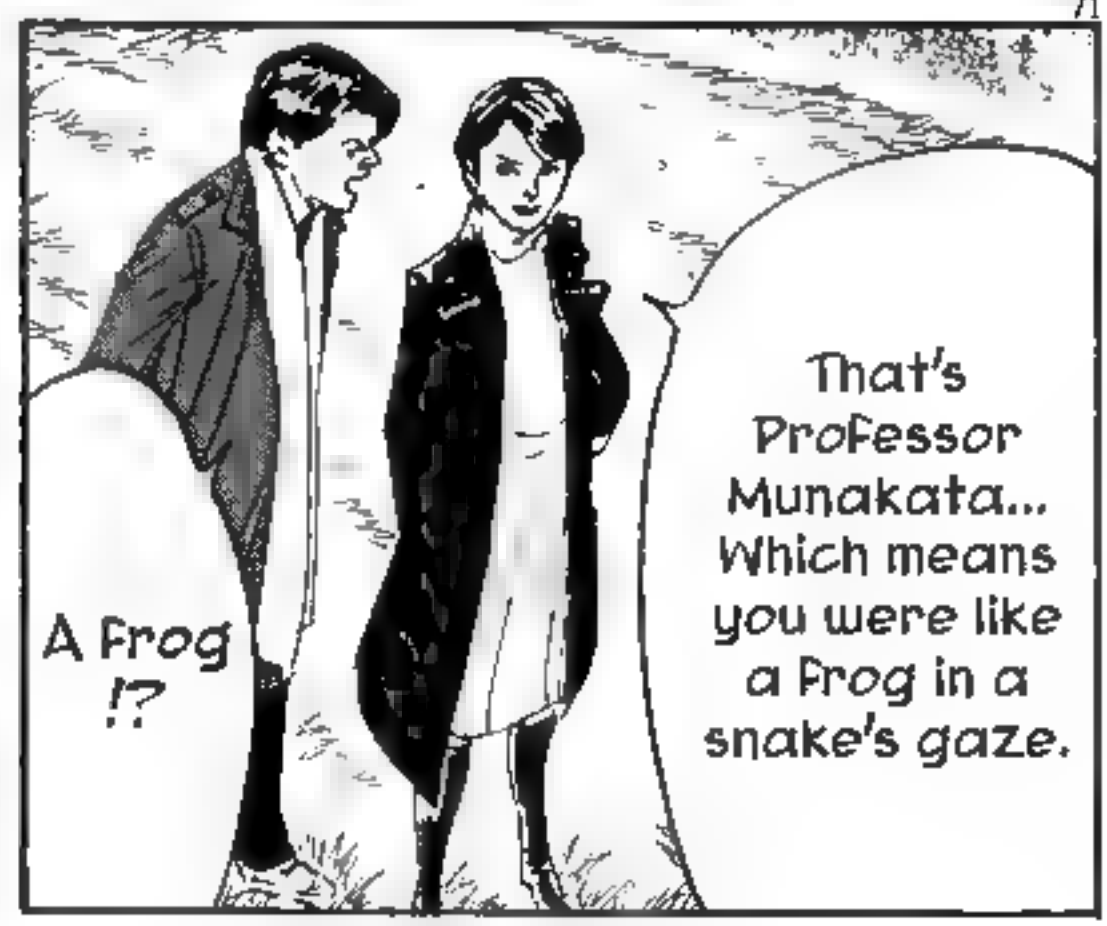
Spit really does wonders with those types!

...Oh ...

It's all thanks to that pest!

K... Kana!
I came here hoping to support your hard work... but it looks like you've been disgraced, Brother

What I mean is, you never stood a chance... You didn't, that is...


A Frog !?
That's Professor Munakata... Which means you were like a Frog in a snake's gaze.

No... I feel like I've discovered the legend of the Centipede and the Dragon here in Kai!

I'm sorry we couldn't be more help...

...Well, I must be off now.

I hope your study of the Takeda goldmine ruins turns something up...

.....

Okay...

Let's clean up for now. We'll resume the study once the press leaves.

Phew...

Takeda Shingen could not claim victory at Kawanaka jima and never accomplished his invasion of Echigo. He sought to march on the Capital as one final gambit before his war chest dried up.

After instructing his men to hide his death for three years, some say he said this.

His westward march continued, and he walked right over Tokugawa Ieyasu, but collapsed of illness before his battle with Oda Nobunaga.

"Raise the Takeda's banner over the bridge of Seta..."

What kind of feelings did this bridge, connected to the legend of the Centipede and the Dragon, stir in him.. ?

THE OAKE RECORDS OF PROFESSOR MIYAMA

CHAPTER 2

PRESENTED BY

HOKUTO NO GUN

TRANSLATED BY

SYSTEMATICCHAOS

EDITING BY

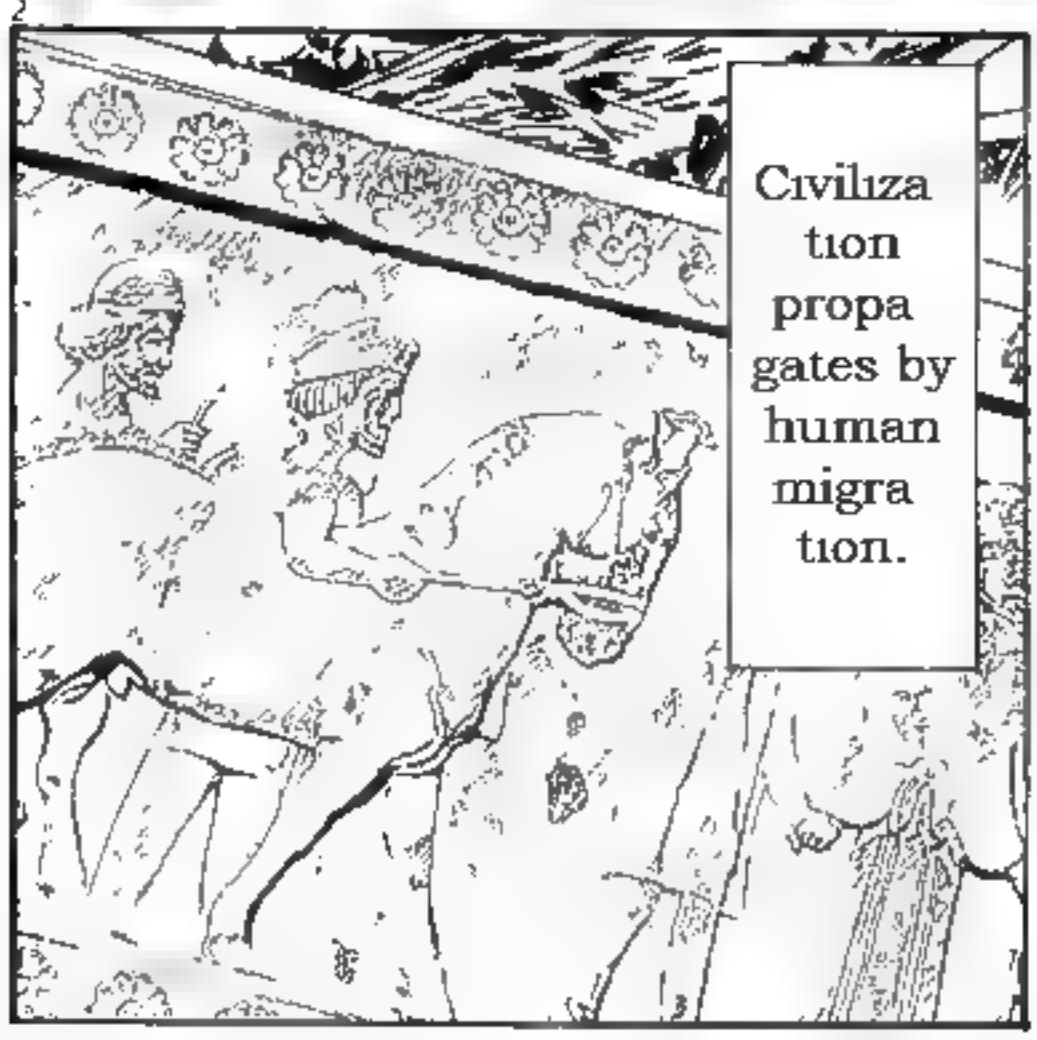
HIGHTIDE AND KAZUHIKO

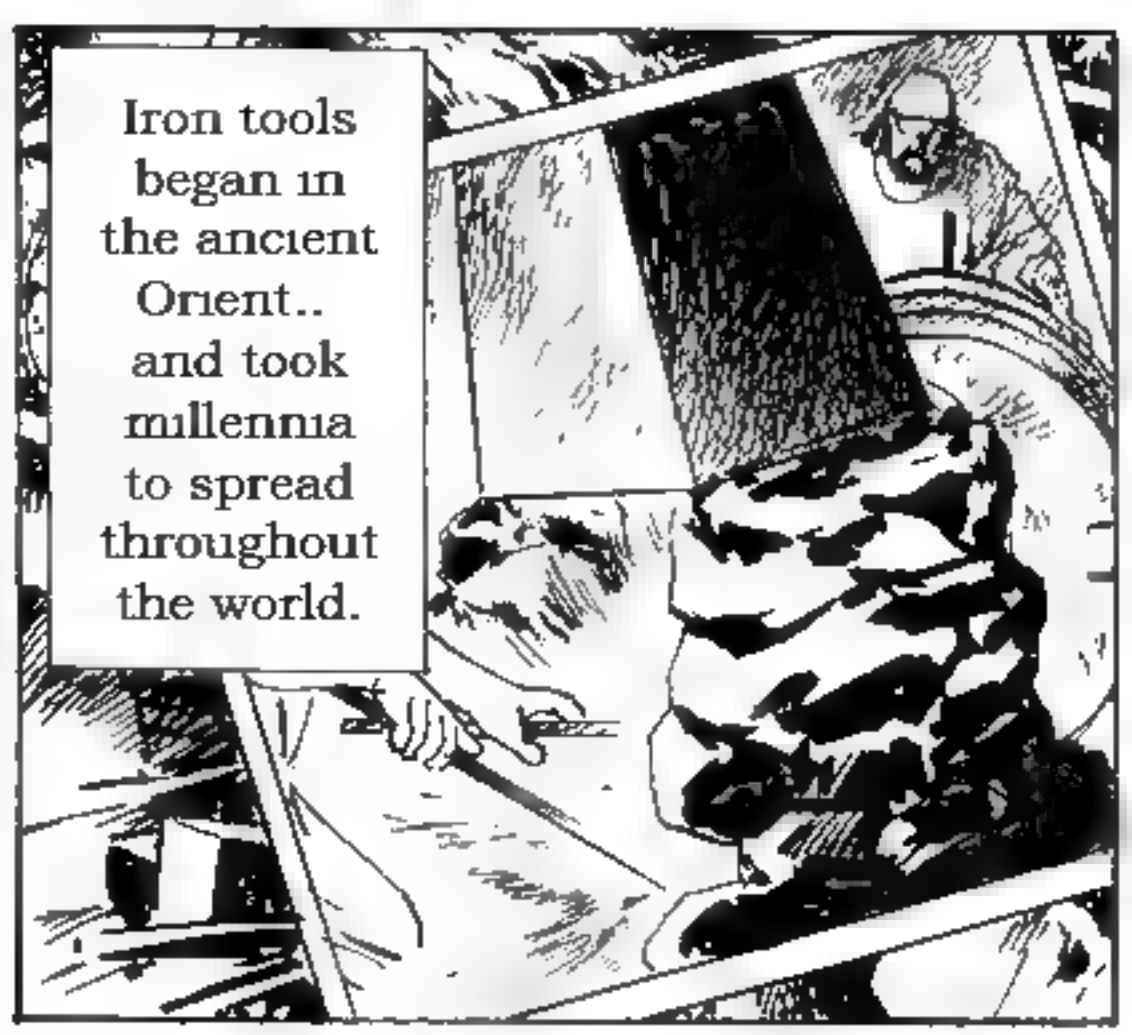
PROOFREADING BY

DESTORYERRING

CHAPTER 3: A MERRY TEMPYO CHRISTMAS

My specialty area is iron age civilization, from its origins to its propagation to Japan ..
My name is Munakata Tadakusu.. I'm a professor of folkloristics at the East Asia University of Culture.


Civiliza tion propa gates by human migra tion.


Iron tools began in the ancient Orient.. and took millennia to spread throughout the world.

The movement of people brought along not only technology, but also myths and legends, and even religion.

And these intermingled and reverberated like waves until they arrived at this archipelago in the Far East.

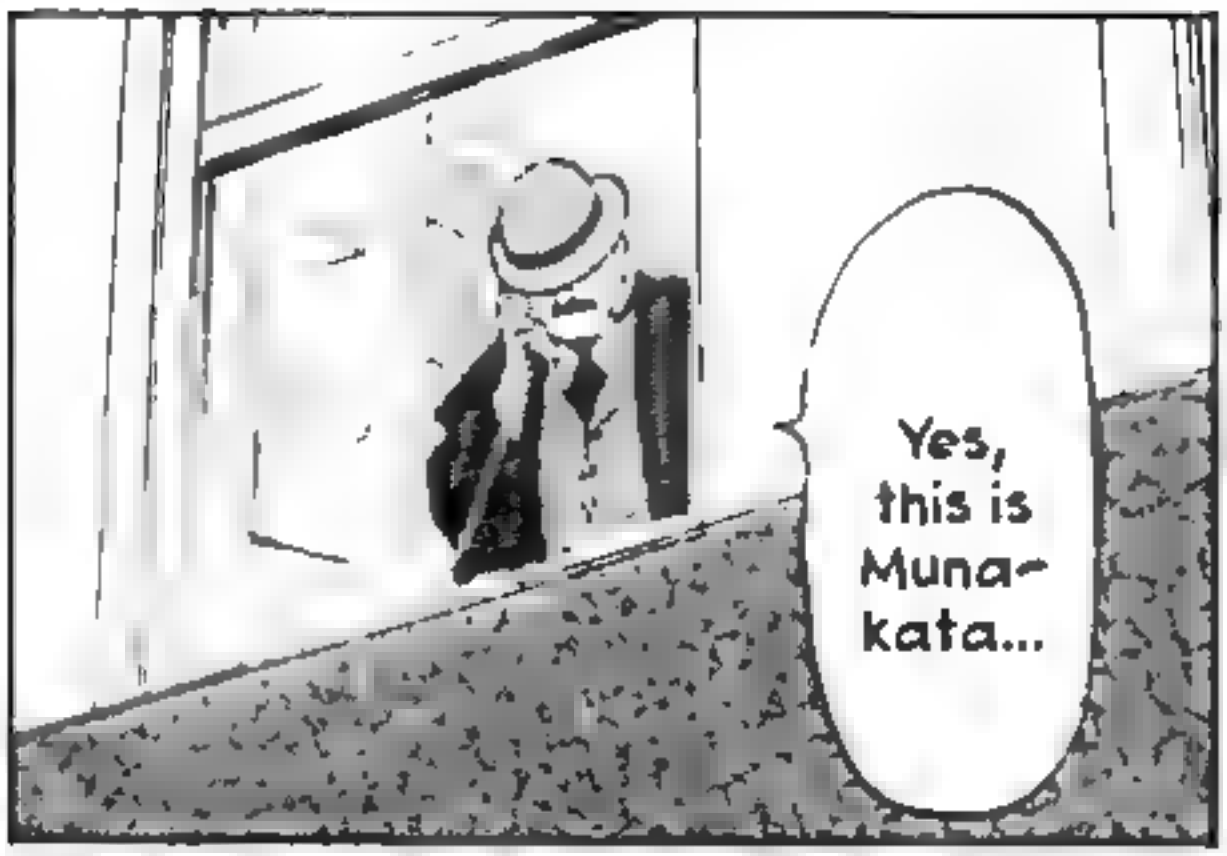
My interest is frequently drawn by their aftereffects.

参考資料／「日本歴史図説」（田文社刊）

The myths and legends that coincide with them are just as interesting ..

Concurrent to iron tools, the waves of a civilization of precious metals, such as copper, silver, and gold, also hit the Japanese islands

In the early 8th Century, when the first natural copper deposit in Japan was discovered in Chichibu, the Imperial Court rejoiced, renaming the era "Wado", and minting copper coins, making it the base of their economy



And in the Tempyo era, when Buddhist civilization began to blossom, copper was needed all the more.

They sought salvation and mercy above all else...

Yoshii Town, Tano District
Gunma Prefecture

Well, I gotta say, this was really great timing.

6

Yokozuki Heita From "Big Literature" Magazine... So what exactly is this project you mentioned?

I didn't know you were planning to stop by Gunma while you were in Chichibu... Lucky me!

Tano District was originally called "Tago District". It was ruled by a man called "Hitsuji Tayu" in the early 8th Century. That's why I stopped by here on my way back From Chichibu...

O...Oh, I can't exactly tell you yet...

Hitsuji Tayu was said to be a settler From the continent, and he was said to have ridden to Chichibu on horseback every day to oversee the copper mining there...

Hmm?

The "Go" of "Tago District" is a character that represents Foreign nations, particularly Persia...

Imibe ...

So you're the sister of that moron... I mean, Imibe Shoichiro ...!?

Yes.

Tee-hee...

I apologize for all the trouble my brother's given you.

My name is Imibe Kana.

M...My editor wanted me to ask you this for our magazine's Christmas edition...

NOT THAT! I MEAN WHY IS IMIBE'S...

Why didn't you tell me at Takasaki Station!?

May I have a word with you, Waka-zuki?

The theme has to do with ancient history...

Oh, me...? This project will involve me travelling with you.

And I consider myself a real historical researcher, unlike my brother.

Are you still against this?

EEP ...!!

The Tago Memorial... It's a monument to the Formation of Tago District in the 8th Century, which was given to a man named Hitsuji.

10

When I came here last, I thought that "Hitsuji Tayu" either referred to a group of metallurgists or herders from Persia...

"These barbarian glyphs were excavated from a stone burial chamber to the side of Tago Hitsuji Tayu's memorial in the Province of Kozuke. Within this chamber was an old bronze plate. And its title was as such!"
Kasshiyawa, volume 73

JNRI

"Some say that the Hitsuji referred to on the memorial in Tago District of Kozuke may have been an ambassador to Tang. Later a crucifix was discovered from his tomb!"
Kasshiyawa, volume 63

JNRI

"Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews"...

JNRI is equivalent to INRI, a Latin acronym for "Iesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum".

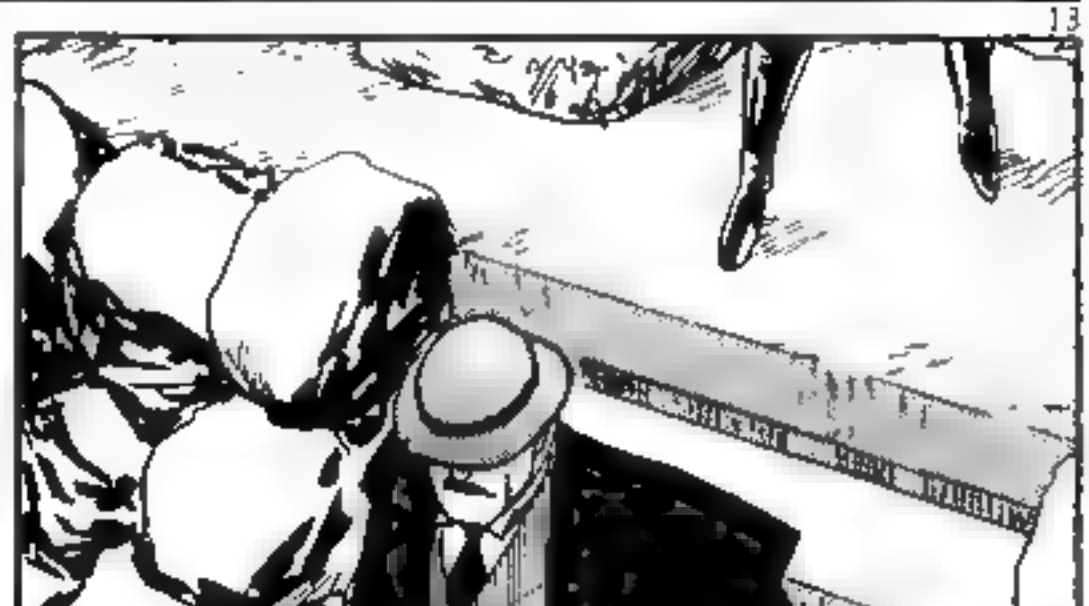
J... JNRI ...?

·I·N·R·I·

Those words and the crucifix are symbols of Christianity...!

INRI
H... HITSUJI TAYU WAS A CHRIS-TIAN FROM PERSIA ...!?

You think it was a hoax?
It may have been true. There's no reason he would fabricate it.
How-ever...


The "Kasshiyawa" is an Edo-period document written by Matsuura Seizan, Lord of Hirado Fief. The actual crucifix and copper plate do not exist today.
And there is no proof of Hitsuji Tayu's grave, either.

The town of Ashio in the neighboring prefecture of Tochigi, and Numata City here in Gunma were particularly famous for this. There was very likely a large population of covert Kirishitan.

In the early Edo period, Kirishitan across the country were arrested due to the ban on Christianity.

I...I see. The Kirish-itan, huh...

This was 200 years before the "Kasshiyawa" was written. It would stand to reason that they couldn't tell how old they were.

Those items may have been burial accessories when they buried their faithful, or they may have simply been hiding the crucifixes and other relics brought in by foreign missionaries.

Impressive, Professor Munakata. I guess I can't rope you in that easily.

We can't tell what period they were from without the actual objects. There is no evidence with which to tie them to Hitsuji Tayu.

Exactly. This discussion on Hitsuji Tayu was just an appetizer...

Christianity and ancient history... I'm guessing the real question's yet to come.

For Prince Shotoku...

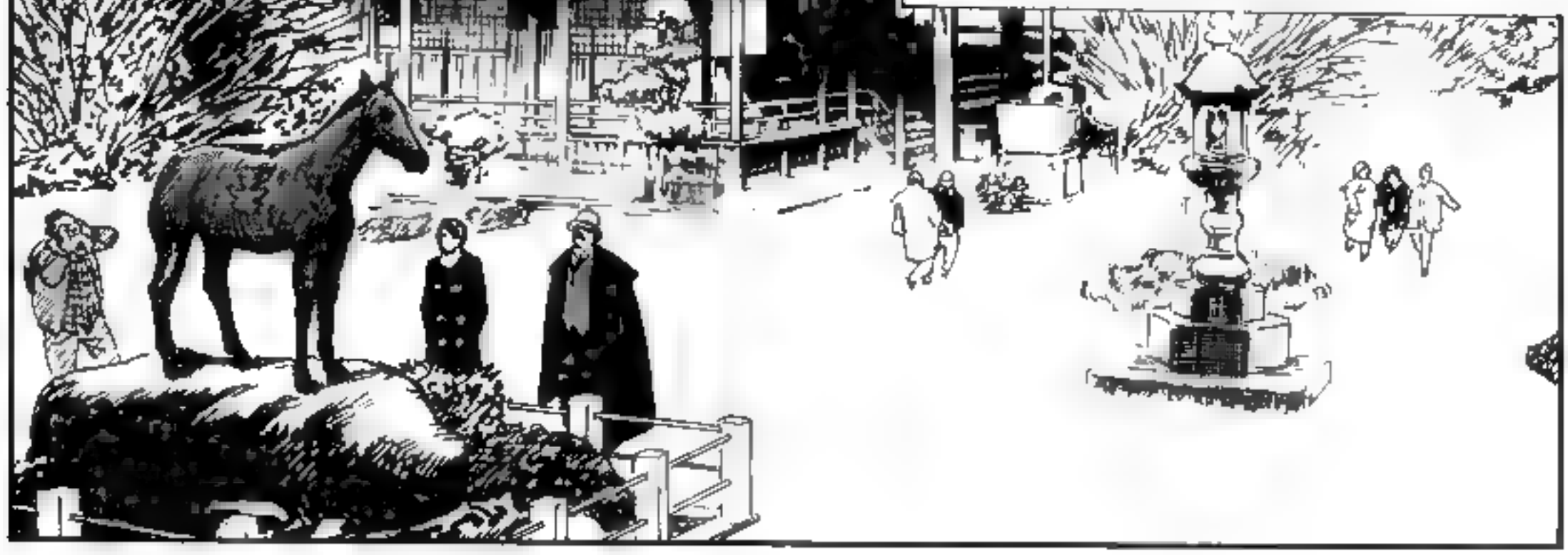
Ahhh hh... I can't keep up...

Asuka
Nara Prefecture

Prince Shotoku's Black Horse... That's the horse they say he used to ride to and from Mt. Fuji in just three days...

17

Tachibana Temple
Traditional birthplace of
Prince Shotoku



Prince Shotoku was born and raised in sixth- and seventh-century Asuka...

He established the Twelve Level Cap and Rank System and wrote the Seventeen-Article Constitution! I remember learning about him in Japanese history class!

And then there was the Sui Ambassador Ono-no-Imoko!

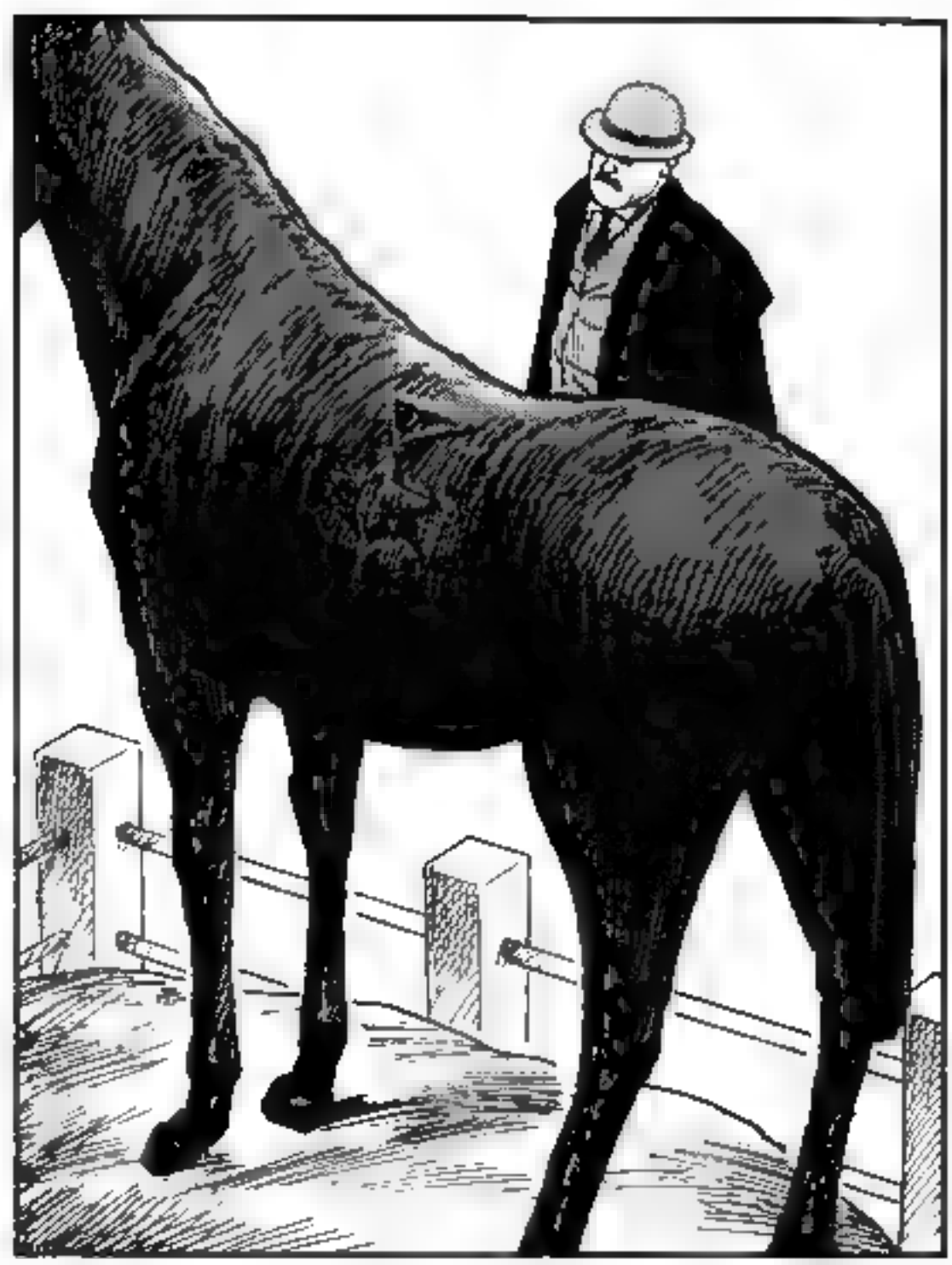
He became crown prince under the rule of Empress Suiko, and managed internal affairs and foreign diplomacy as regent...

I READ ABOUT IT IN A MANGA!

"From the sovereign of the land of the rising sun..."

He carried the famous letter to the Sui Emperor

He must have been a wise man, with as good lineage as a racehorse.
It was very likely that he was popular and adored by all.



And about a hundred years later after the "Nihon Shoki" was compiled, he was given the posthumous name "Prince Shotoku"... A tribute like none other.

The Nihon Shoki says that he was born the instant his birth mother touched the door to a stable.

Yes. His name in life was Umayado-no-Toyo-tomimi-no-Miko...

I...Isn't that just like the Bible story that says that Jesus Christ was born in a stable!?

That's not the only similarity.

Hmm.

There's a legend that before the Prince's birth, his mother was visited in a dream by a golden man, who called himself "Guse Kannon" and prophesied that he would be born as her child.

That's just like the "Annunciation", where the archangel prophesied the birth of the "Christ" to the holy mother Mary...

A... AHHH H...!

Simply replace "Guse Kannon" with "Christ", and it's practically the same story.

Then there's the legend of Nichira, Priest of Kudara, who knew the Prince was Guse Kannon and worshiped him...

You could say that's similar to John the Baptist, who recognized Jesus as the Christ.

Jesus was crucified and buried, then rose again in three days, leaving behind nothing but a cloth in the tomb...

And there's a similar story in the Nihon Shoki.

The story where Prince Shotoku went to Mt. Kataoka, and gave food and clothing to a man who had collapsed of hunger...

22

Shotoku said that man was a saint...

Days later, the man died and Shotoku buried him...

But suddenly, the tomb was empty, leaving behind nothing but the clothes he had left him.

But why are they similar...?
They certainly are similar
That's the question. Why are they similar...

Christianity may have spread here in ancient times, long before the age of the Kirishitan.
That can only mean a vast number of Christians had settled here...!!
23
Uhhh, Editor...
Yeah, there [illegible] sparks flying now. It's getting pretty awful...

Will you accept this theory as a challenge to you, Professor Munakata?

24

The great Hata Clan.

There are records of a mass settlement in Japan of over ten thousand people from the continent between the 4th and 5th Century.

There is a theory that they were an ancient group of Christians.

Yes. The Hata Clan.

The Hata Clan was so proficient at raising silkworms and weaving silk that their name became the root For the word "hataori", meaning weaving, but they also boasted the technology and manpower to conduct gold mining and public works...

They're a mysterious clan that claimed to be the descendants of Qin Shi Huang, but there's even a theory that they were Jews that had migrated From Palestine...

And the Hata Clan served Prince Umayado... Prince Shotoku and his clan.

After the Prince's death, the Hata Clan took his image and spoke of him as a saint like Jesus Christ.

I believe that those legends then came to be reflected in the Nihon Shoki...!

28

You can tear my theory to shreds if you want. I don't care about any project.

W...What do you think, Professor Munakata? If we combine Miss Imibe's theory connecting ancient history to Christianity with your comments, we may be able to make it on time for our Christmas project...

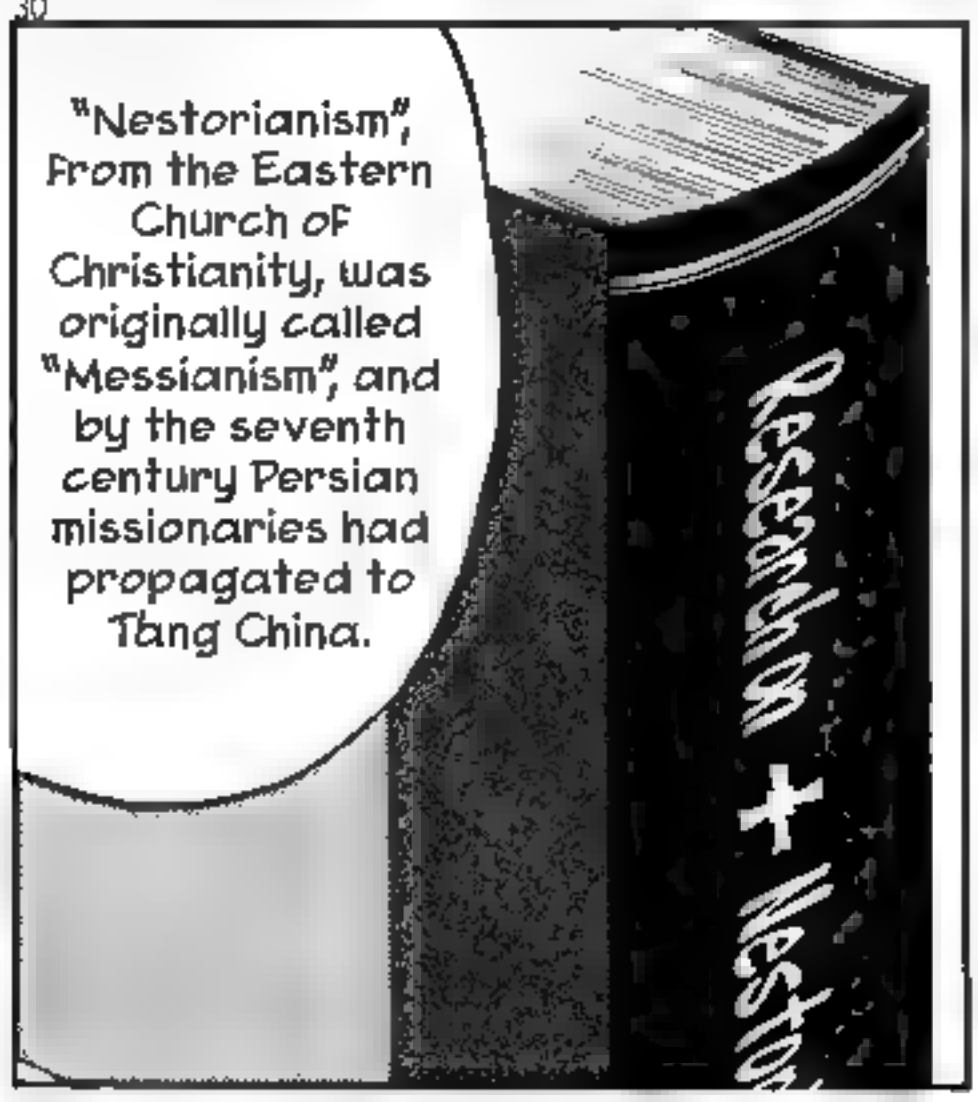
I accept your challenge! I don't care about any editon either

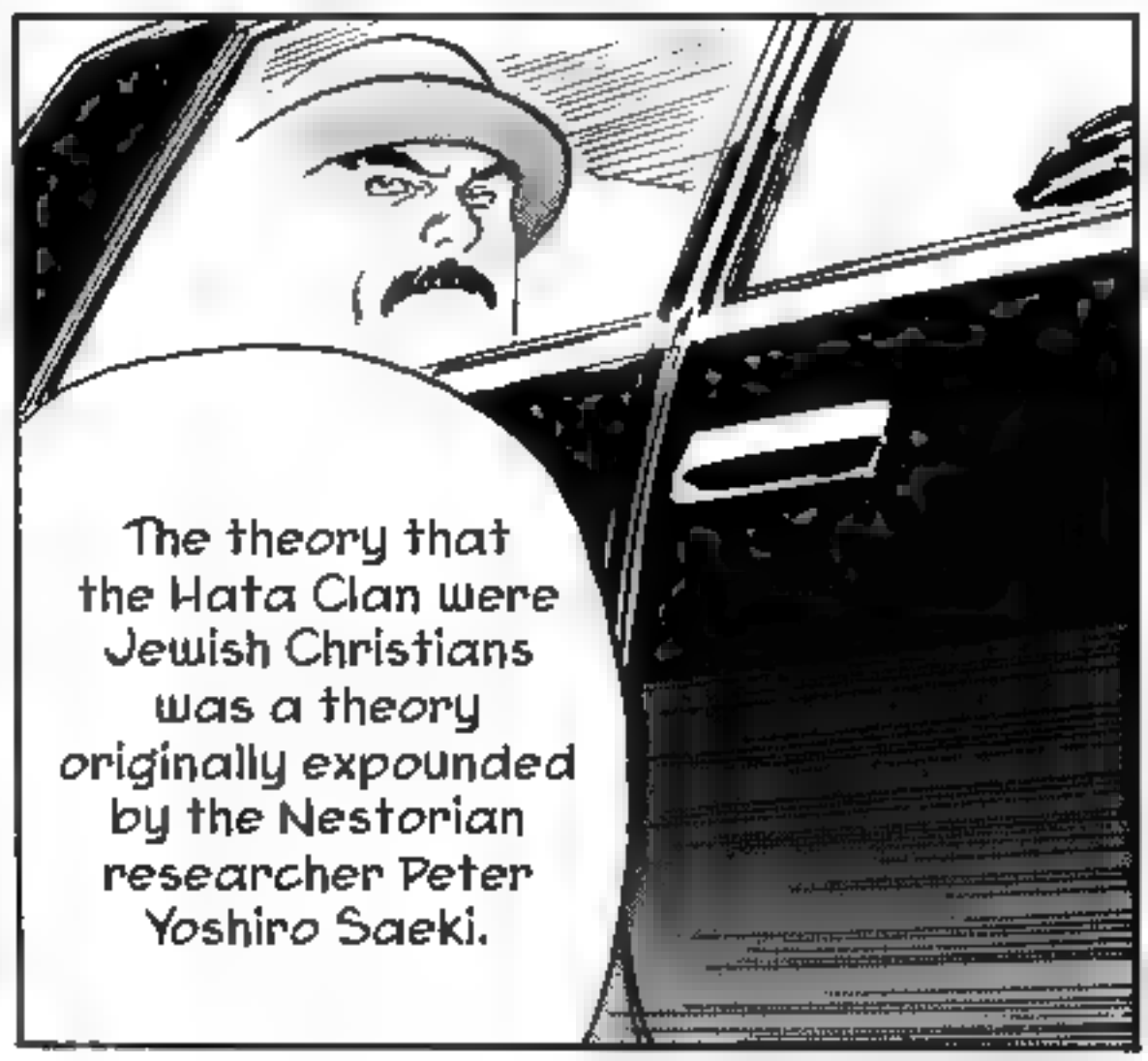
NO, LISTEN! THAT WOULD NOT BE GOOD AT ALL!

Very well!

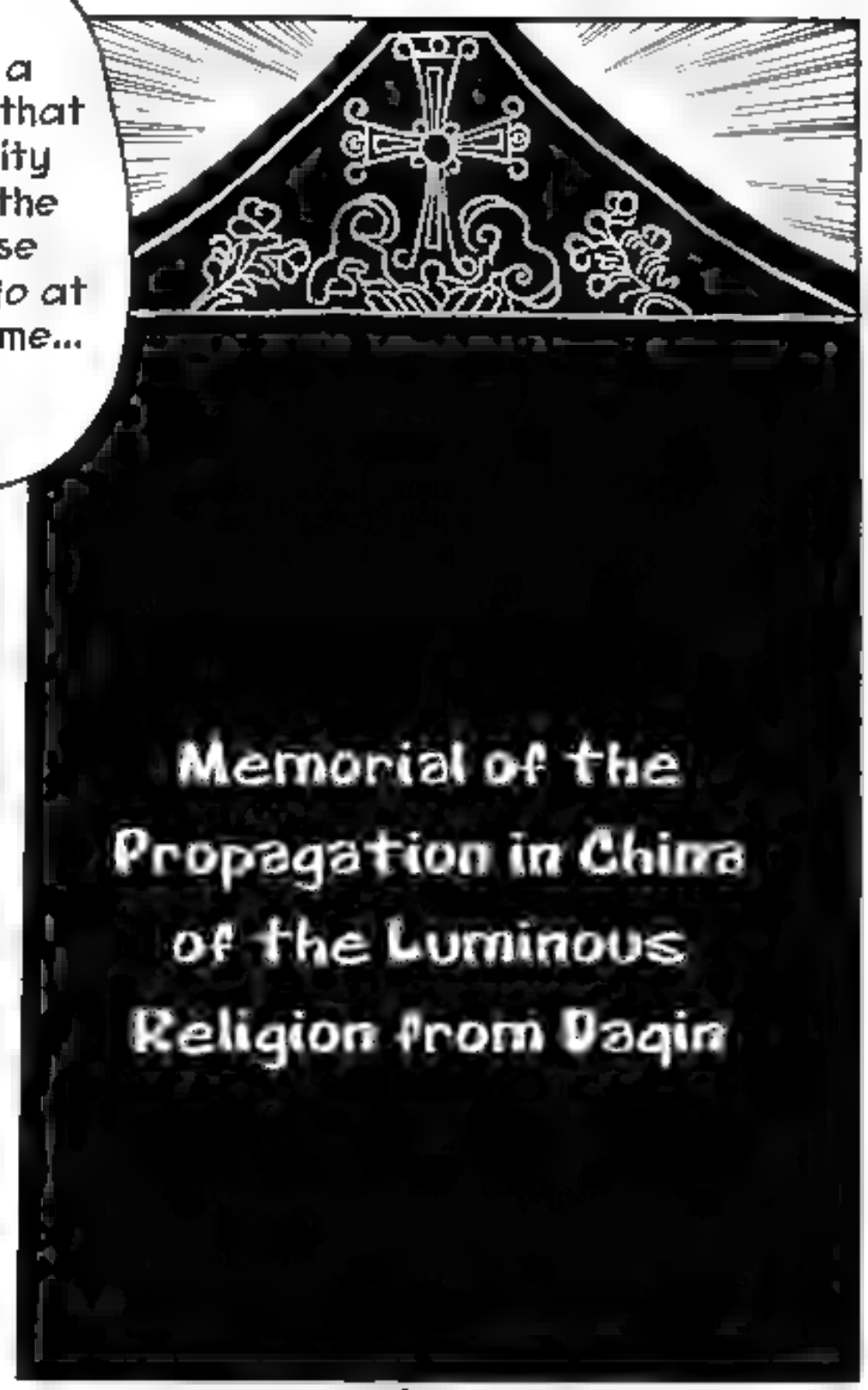
No, that would be very bad! My editor would chew me out!

Prince's Road

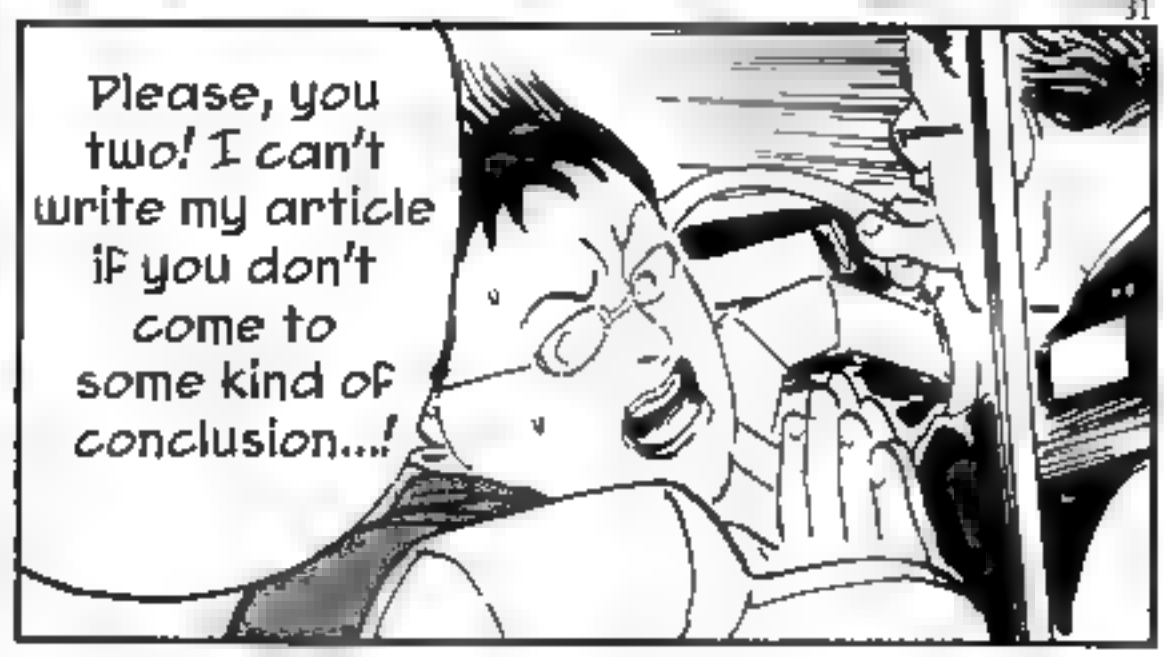

"Nestorianism", From the Eastern Church of Christianity, was originally called "Messianism", and by the seventh century Persian missionaries had propagated to Tang China.
RESEARCH + INSTITUTE

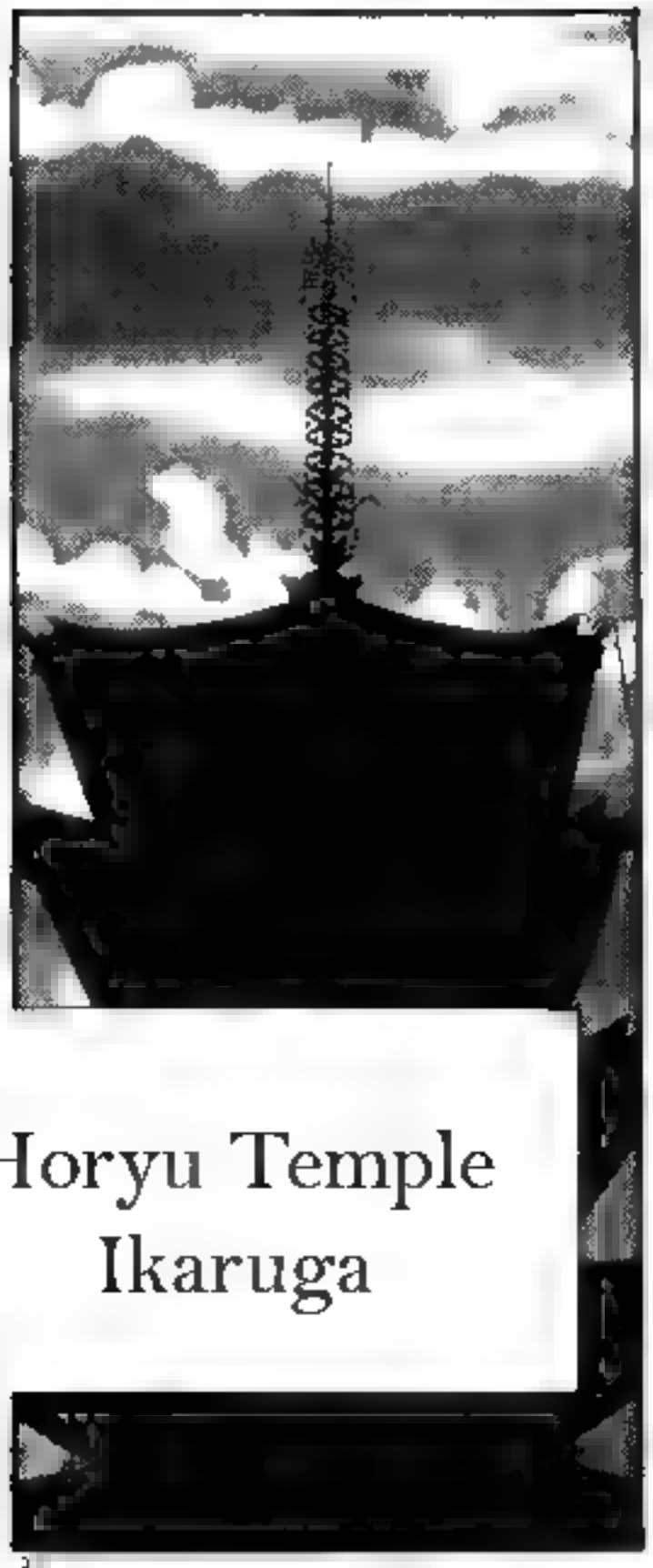

The theory that the Hata Clan were Jewish Christians was a theory originally expounded by the Nestorian researcher Peter Yoshiro Saeki.

There is a possibility that Christianity reached the Japanese archipelago at a similar time...
I don't think it had anything to do with Nestorianism. True, there was the Persian Li Mitsuei, who settled here in the 8th Century...

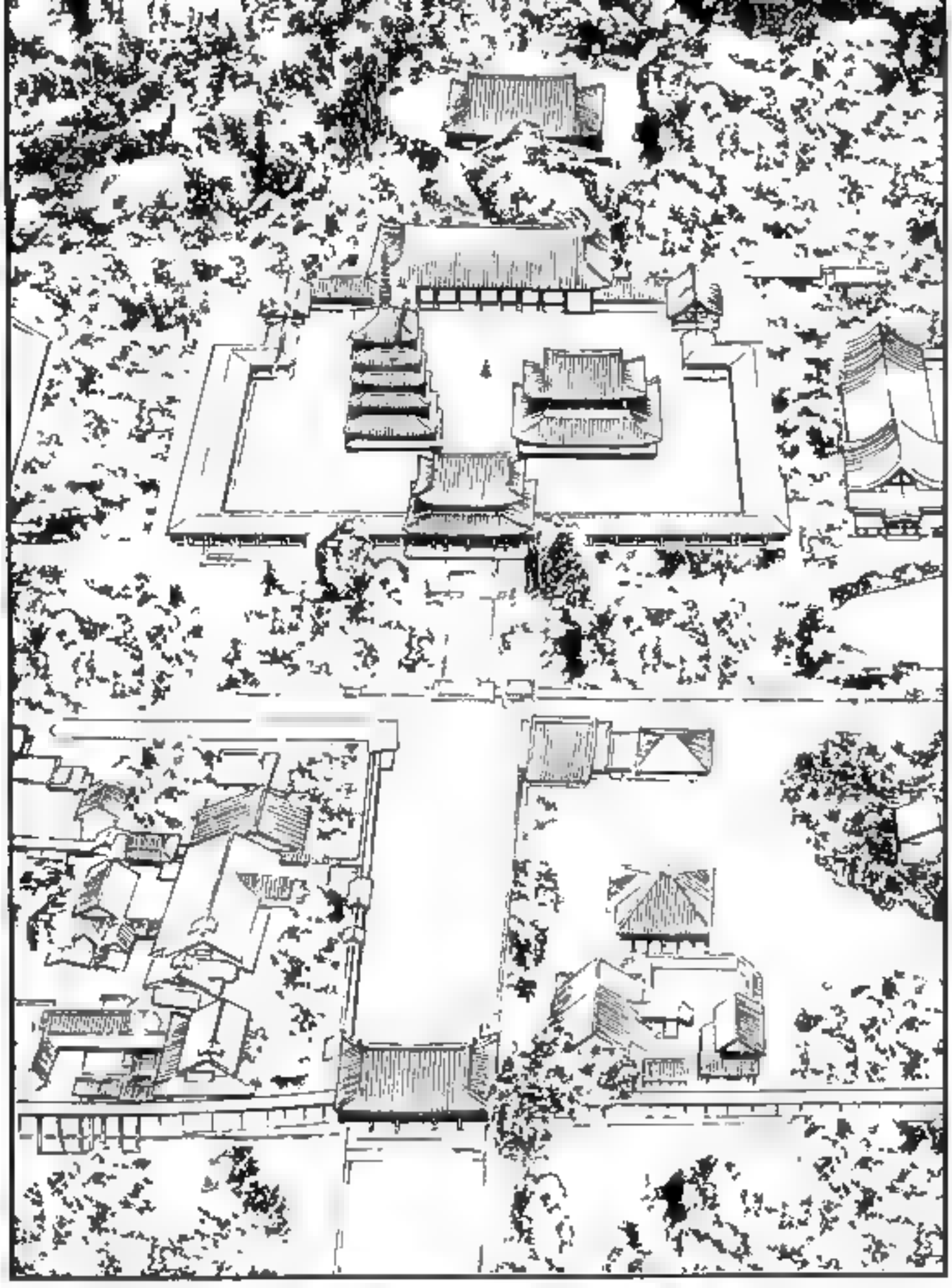

Memorial of the Propagation in China of the Luminous Religion from Daqin

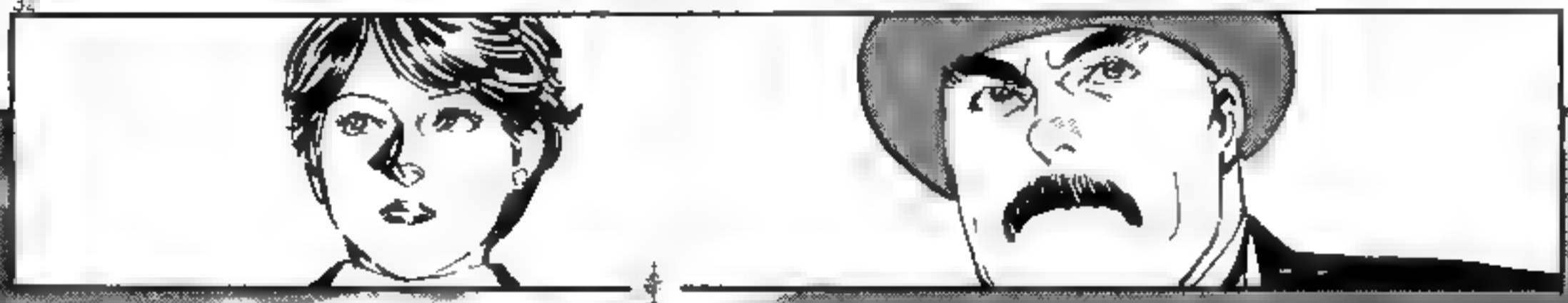
But there's not even any proof that he was a Nestorian. Besides...


Please, you two! I can't write my article if you don't come to some kind of conclusion...!



Horyu Temple Ikaruga





COINCI-DENCE !?

The Prince's birth and Jesus Christ's birth in a stable is no more than a coincidence.

Let's start with the name "Umaya-do".

.....

There's a good chance that it was customary for members of the royal family to be given the names of common places, whether a stable or a kitchen.

Even the Prince's aunt, Empress Suiko, had the name Toyomike-Kashikiya-Hime... And "Kashikiya" means kitchen.

33

To start off, it would have been impossible for thousands of people to settle at once. Even the voyages of the large Tang Ambassadors' ships was often a matter of luck. They would have had to be prepared to make many sacrifices.

And the theory that the Hata Clan was a large group of Jewish Christians isn't so easy to accept.

Even supposing that they were pressured by the Buddhists, it's unlikely that they would vanish without a trace, and they'd have no reason to go so far to hide them.

Even if there was a large group of Christians that settled here, their influence would have been bigger.

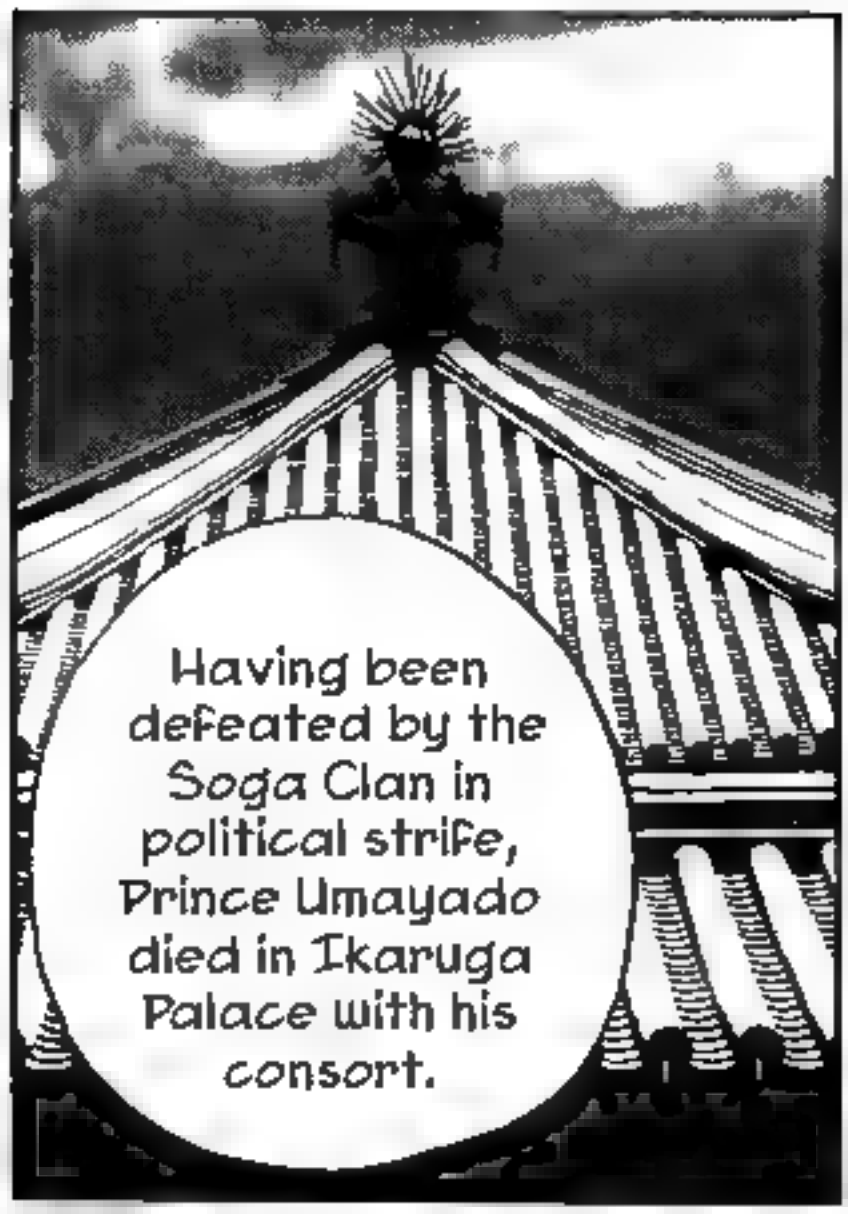
There would be at least one temple or shrine with a crucifix.

Do you really think that Jewish Christians would have likened a single Japanese prince to the savior of all mankind?

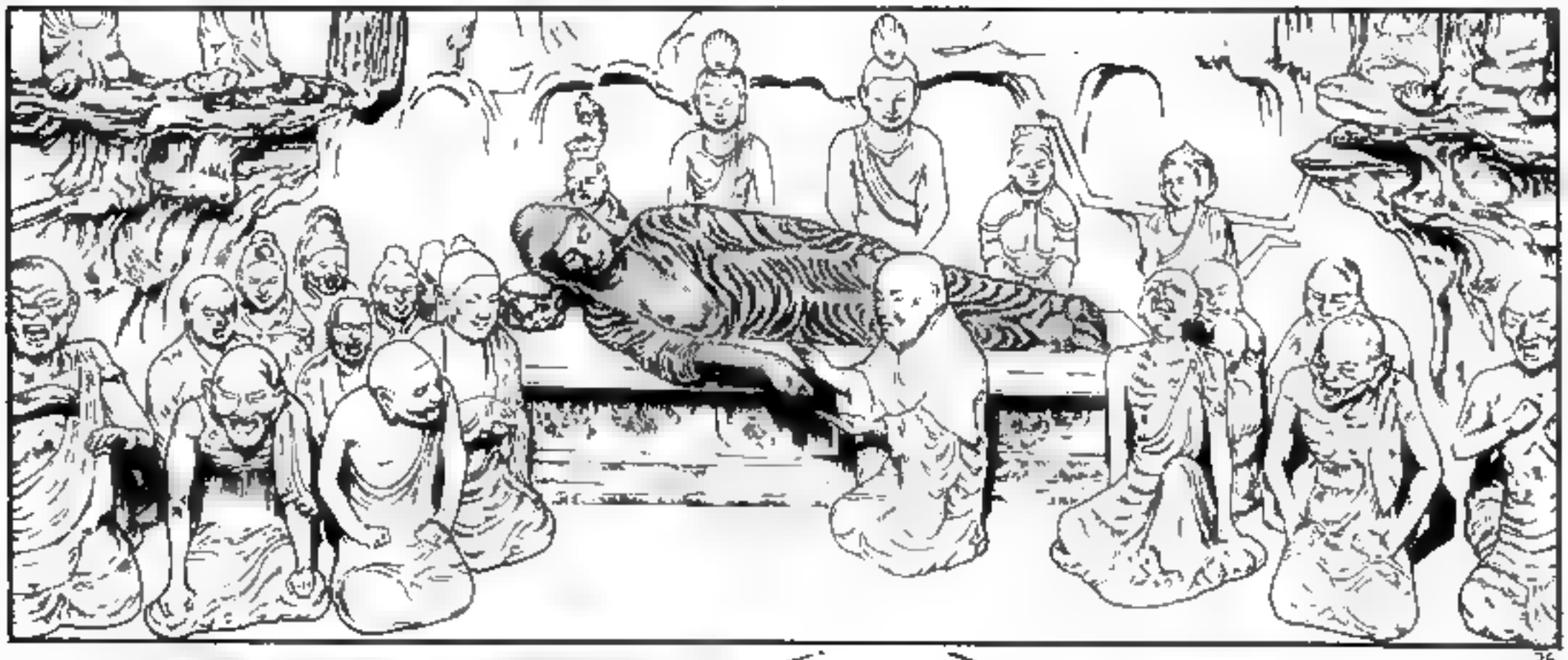
...So are you saying that the similarities of Prince Shotoku's legends to the Bible are just coincidence, as well...?

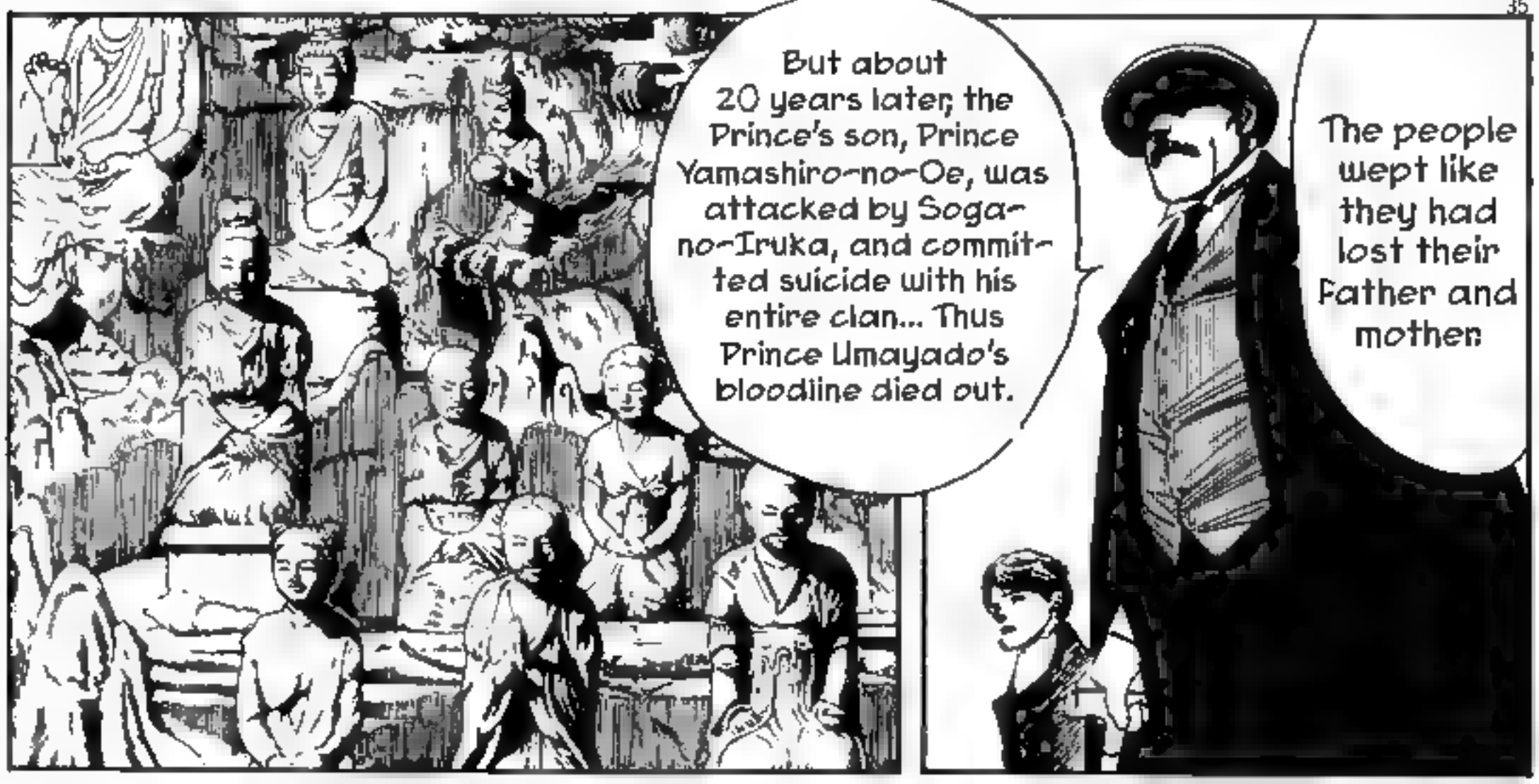
Horyu Temple was said to have been built by Prince Umayado...

.....


Having been defeated by the Soga Clan in political strife, Prince Umayado died in Ikaruga Palace with his consort.

Ikaruga Palace, where the Prince's family lives, was just about where the Hall of Dreams is now...




But about 20 years later, the Prince's son, Prince Yamashiro-no-Oe, was attacked by Soga-no-Iruka, and committed suicide with his entire clan... Thus Prince Umayado's bloodline died out.
The people wept like they had lost their father and mother

In 670, Horyu Temple burned down...

36

That was two years before the Jinshin Rebellion"...

.....

A fragment of a mural depicting the fire, which was said to have been caused by lightning, was only discovered recently.

Prince and prince clashed over the Imperial Throne in what would be the greatest civil war of ancient times.

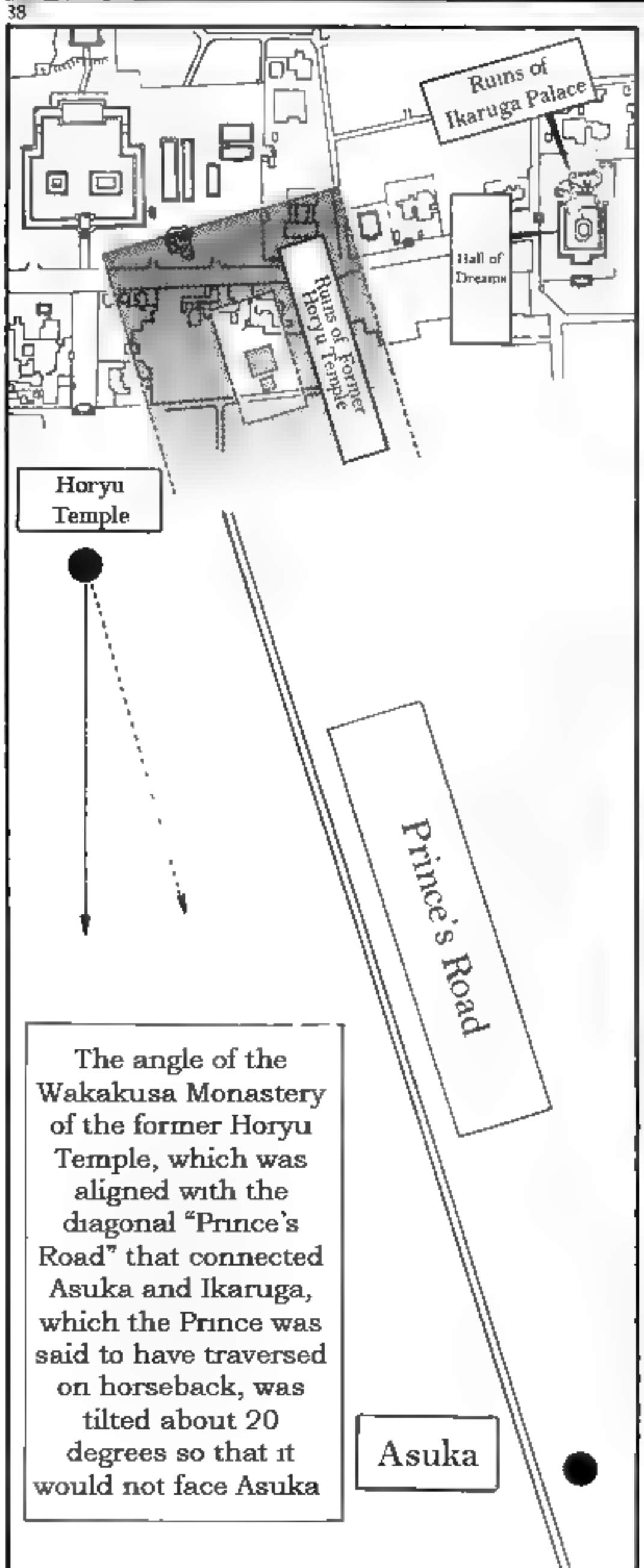
Then the era moved from the 7th Century into the 8th, into the era of Tempyo...

It's likely that this was when Horyu Temple was rebuilt in its current form.

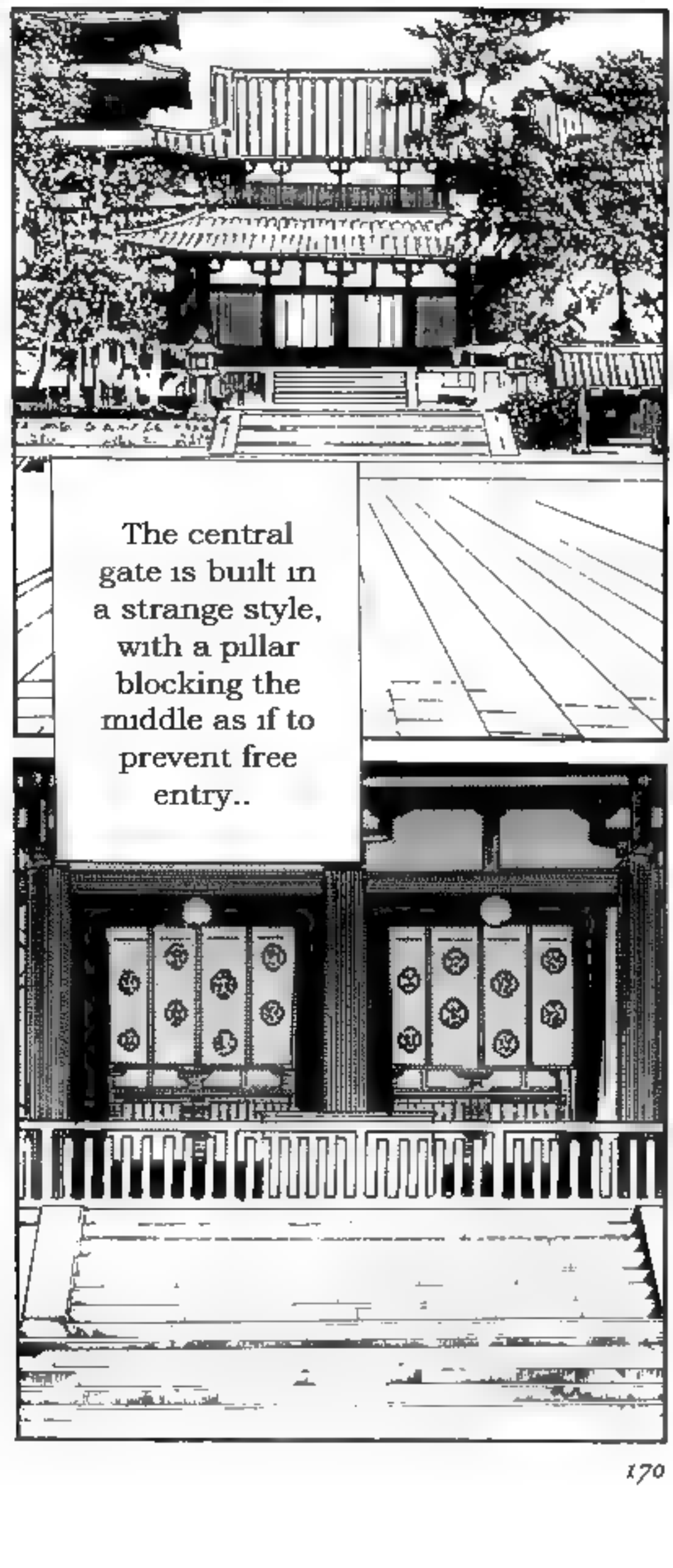
The Kojiki and Nihon Shoki were compiled around that time as well...

And the legends and beliefs of Prince Shotoku spread...

Some say that Horyu Temple was recon structed to seal and pacify Prince Shoto ku's vengeful spirit.



The angle of the Wakakusa Monastery of the former Horyu Temple, which was aligned with the diagonal "Prince's Road" that connected Asuka and Ikaruga, which the Prince was said to have traversed on horseback, was tilted about 20 degrees so that it would not face Asuka



The central gate is built in a strange style, with a pillar blocking the middle as if to prevent free entry..

Inside it is a "Statue of Guse Kannon", which was intended to resemble the Prince

And the Hall of Dreams stands upon the ruins of Ikaruga Palace, where Prince Shotoku, his wife, and his descendants all lost their lives

It was a hidden Buddha that no one would see for over a thousand years, until the reign of Meiji

Then the prince of Emperor Tenji, who killed him, died in battle during the Jinshin Rebellion.

Didn't you learn it in Japanese History? Soga-no-Iruka, the man that attacked their clan, was killed in the Taika Reforms.

P...Prince Shotoku's vengeful spirit...? What happened?

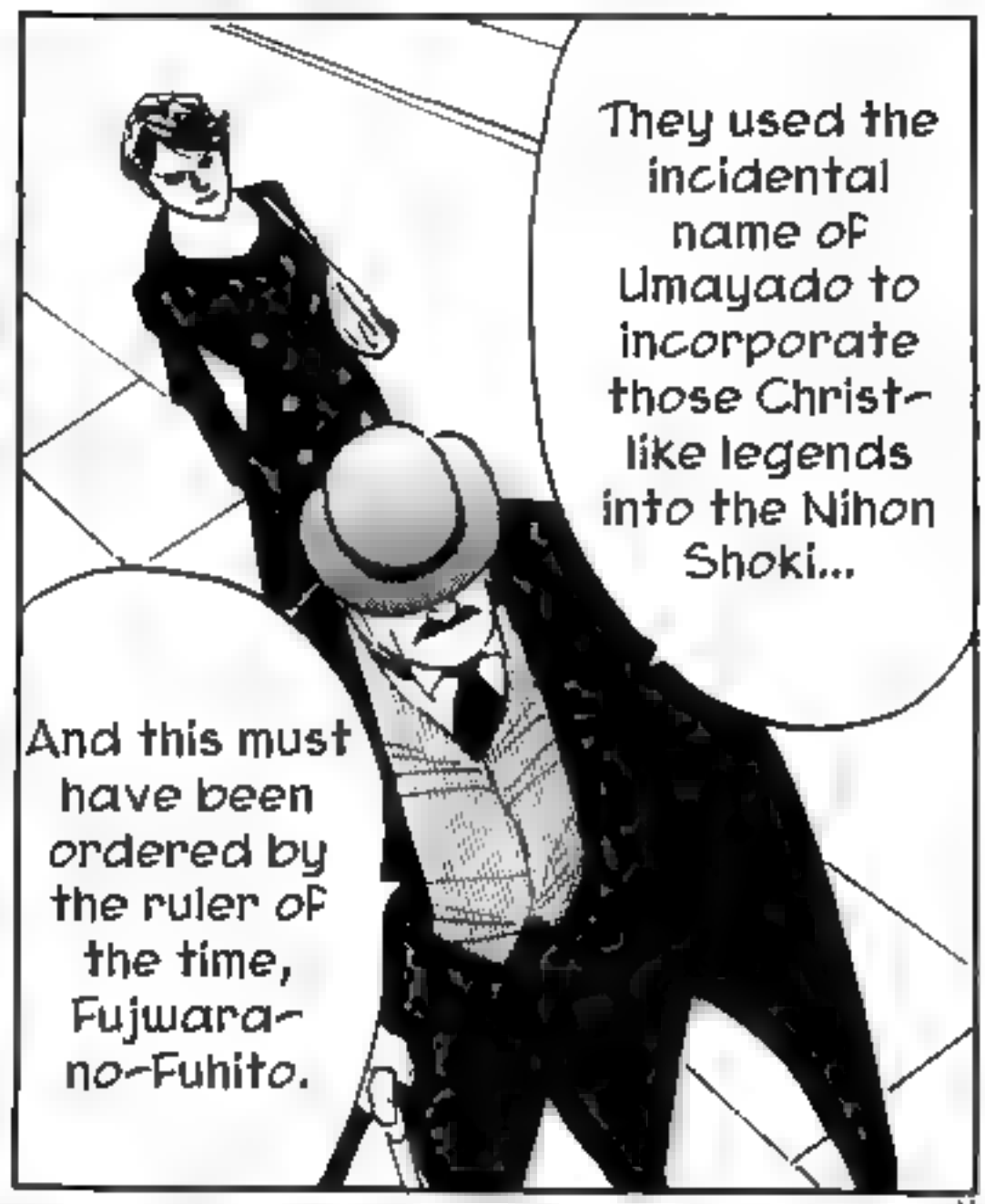
Prince Shotoku was then quelled in Horyu Temple as a saint that propagated Buddhism. Anybody could tell that...

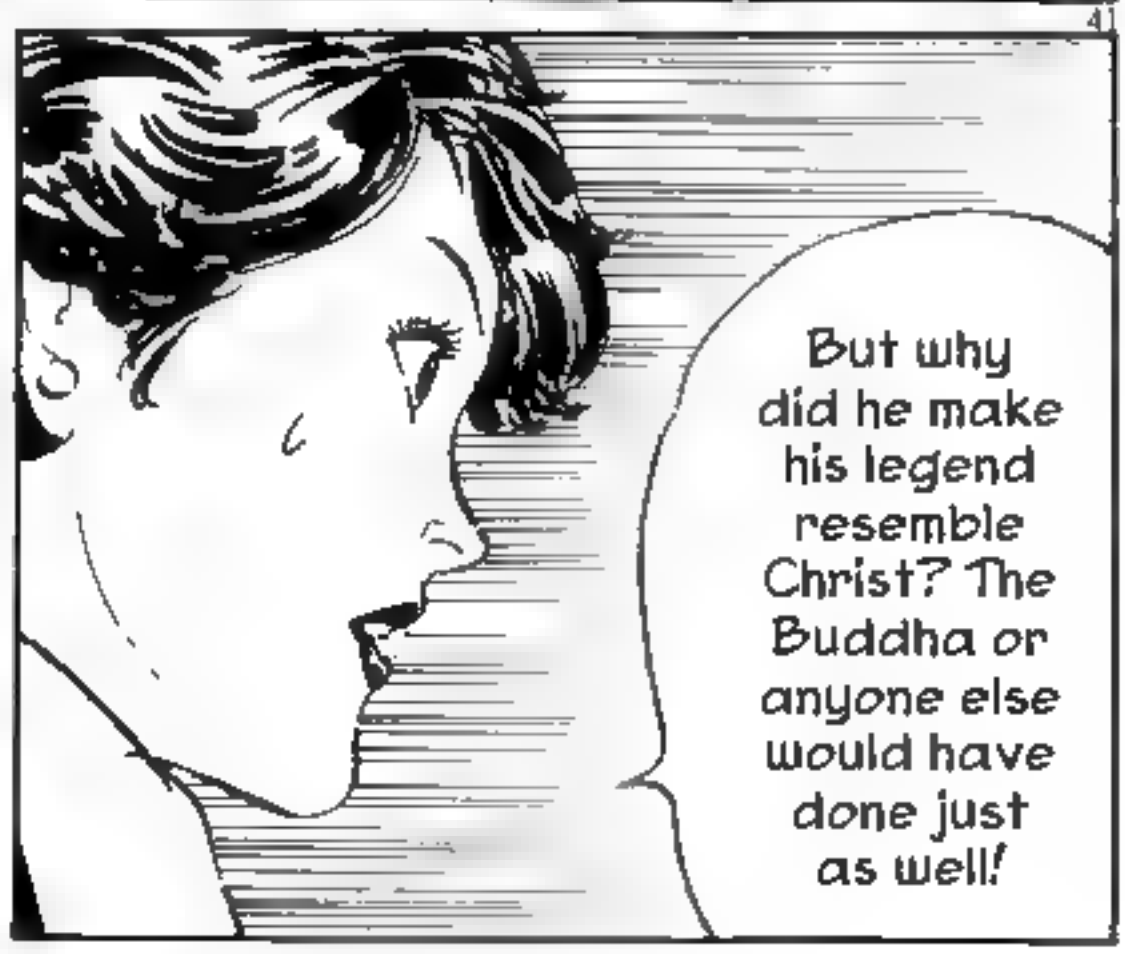
Blood begat blood for an entire century.

I think there was a less readily visible message for his spiritual repose...!

But that's not all...

The thirty volume "Nihonki (Nihon Shoki)" was completed in 720. .


They used the incidental name of Umayado to incorporate those Christ-like legends into the Nihon Shoki...
And this must have been ordered by the ruler of the time, Fujwara-no-Fuhito.



B...But I thought you said he couldn't have!!

I only said that mass migrations like that of the Hata Clan were impossible.

There is a possibility that a small number of Christians settled here.

That's the only explanation!

Prince Shotoku and his clan believed in Christianity...

But that's just another baseless theory...

There are records of a number of Persian engineers that settled here in the 6th Century for the construction of Asuka Temple.

If they were Christians, and came into contact with Prince Umayado...

Only those who knew about Christianity would have.

Christian components are incorporated into the Nihon Shoki.

But none of the Japanese people at the time would have been able to understand them.

They honored Prince Shotoku as a saint, as a message for his spiritual repose... A message directed solely to the spirit of Prince Shotoku...

A message that only Prince Shotoku would have understood...

Who wrote these Christian components that no one knew about!?

T...Then who...

Hitsuji Tayu...!?

I only said there was no evidence. I never denied the possibility.

B... BUT YOU DENIED THAT, TOO...

He also had his merit from developing the copper mines, and may have been given Tago District as his reward.

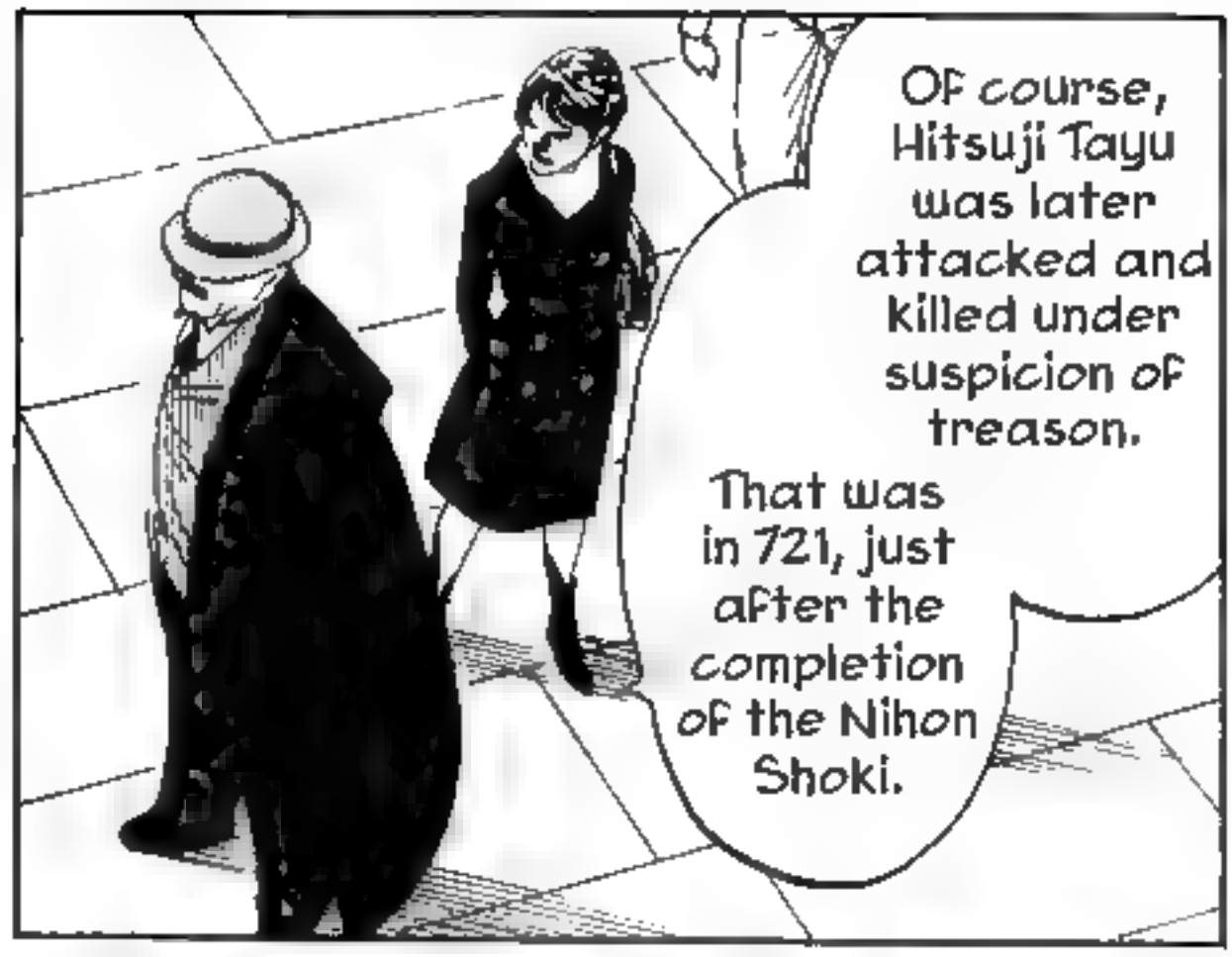
If Hitsuji Tayu was a Christian, as Miss Imibe suggests, then he could have used his knowledge to cooperate with the Nihon Shoki.

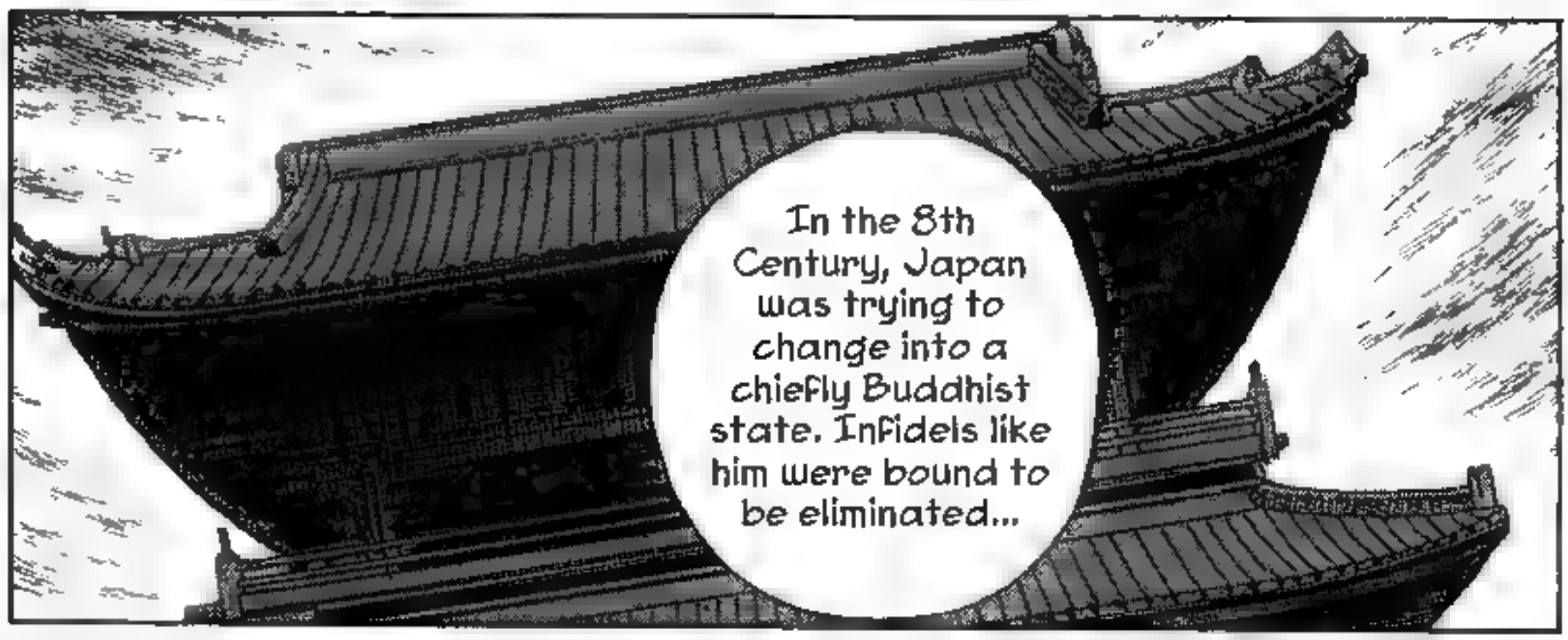
44

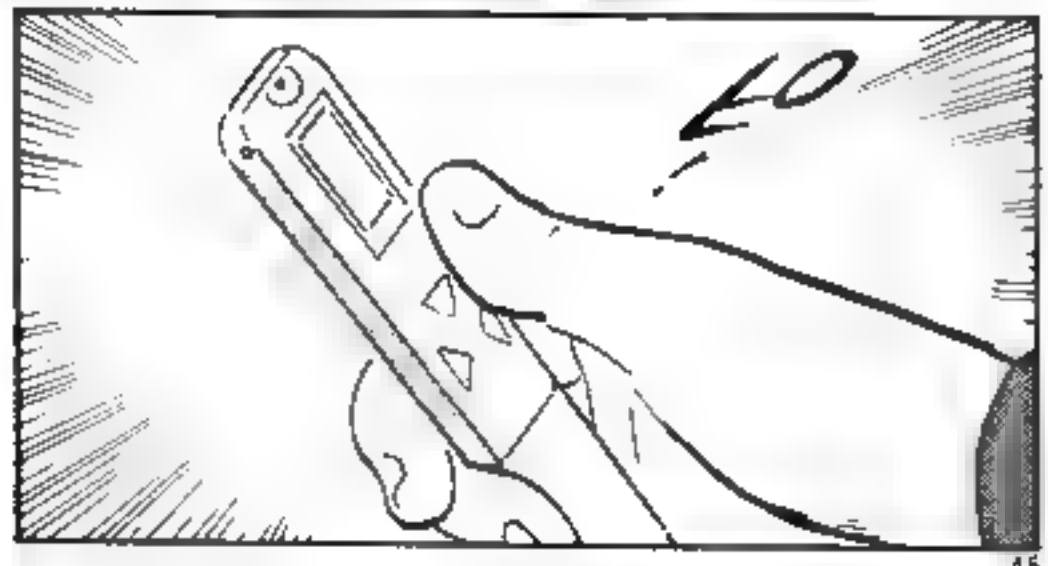
In Wado year 4... 711, he was given the district by Fujiwara-no-Fuhito.

FUJIWARA

Was he being silenced ...?


Of course, Hitsuji Tayu was later attacked and killed under suspicion of treason.
That was in 721, just after the completion of the Nihon Shoki.

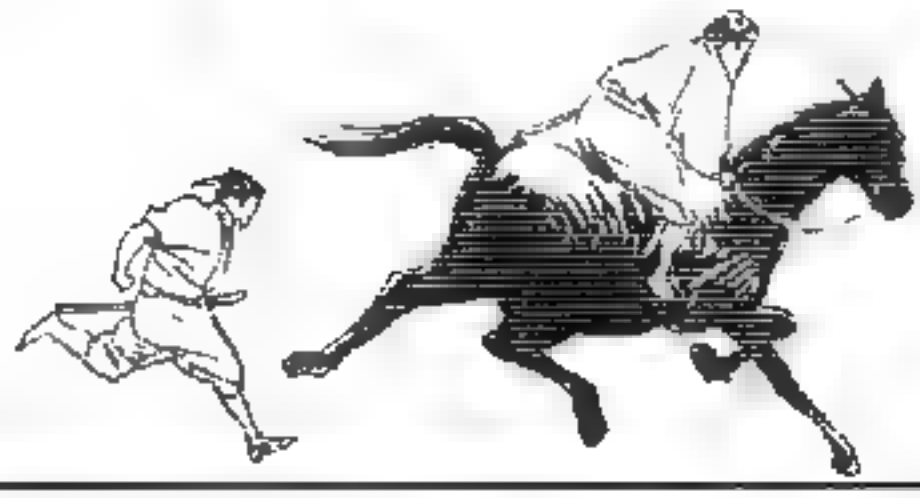

In the 8th Century, Japan was trying to change into a chiefly Buddhist state. Infidels like him were bound to be eliminated...


LO

Thank you so much! I think we've come to a conclusion here. I've gotta report to my editor!

They also say that Hitsuji Tayu rode a horse called "Gonta Kurige", and he rode it from Gunma to the capital with his servant Kohagi behind him.

Prince Shotoku's favorite horse was named "Kurokoma", right...? They say that he rode it along the road to the capital with his servant Choshimaru behind him, and sometimes even rode to Mt. Fuji and returned...



It looks like these two seemingly unrelated people have legends that overlap at a single point.

I suppose that may be what the people were looking for...

It's snowing ...

Whatever the case, it was during the Tempyo era, a hundred years after Prince Umayado's death, that "Prince Shotoku" was born...

But Professor Munakata...

I may have lost this time...

That's for spitting on my brother...

"Umayado no
Toyotomimi no Miko ..
His mother was the Princess
Anahobe no Hashihito ..
As she reached the stables,
she touched the stable door,
and without any pains
of labor she gave birth
immediately Even from his
birth he was well spoken.
Truly he had the wisdom
of a saint." Nihon Shoki

THE OAKE RECORDS OF PROFESSOR MIYAKAWA

CHAPTER 3

PRESENTED BY

HOKUTO NO GUN

TRANSLATED BY

SYSTEMATICCHAOS

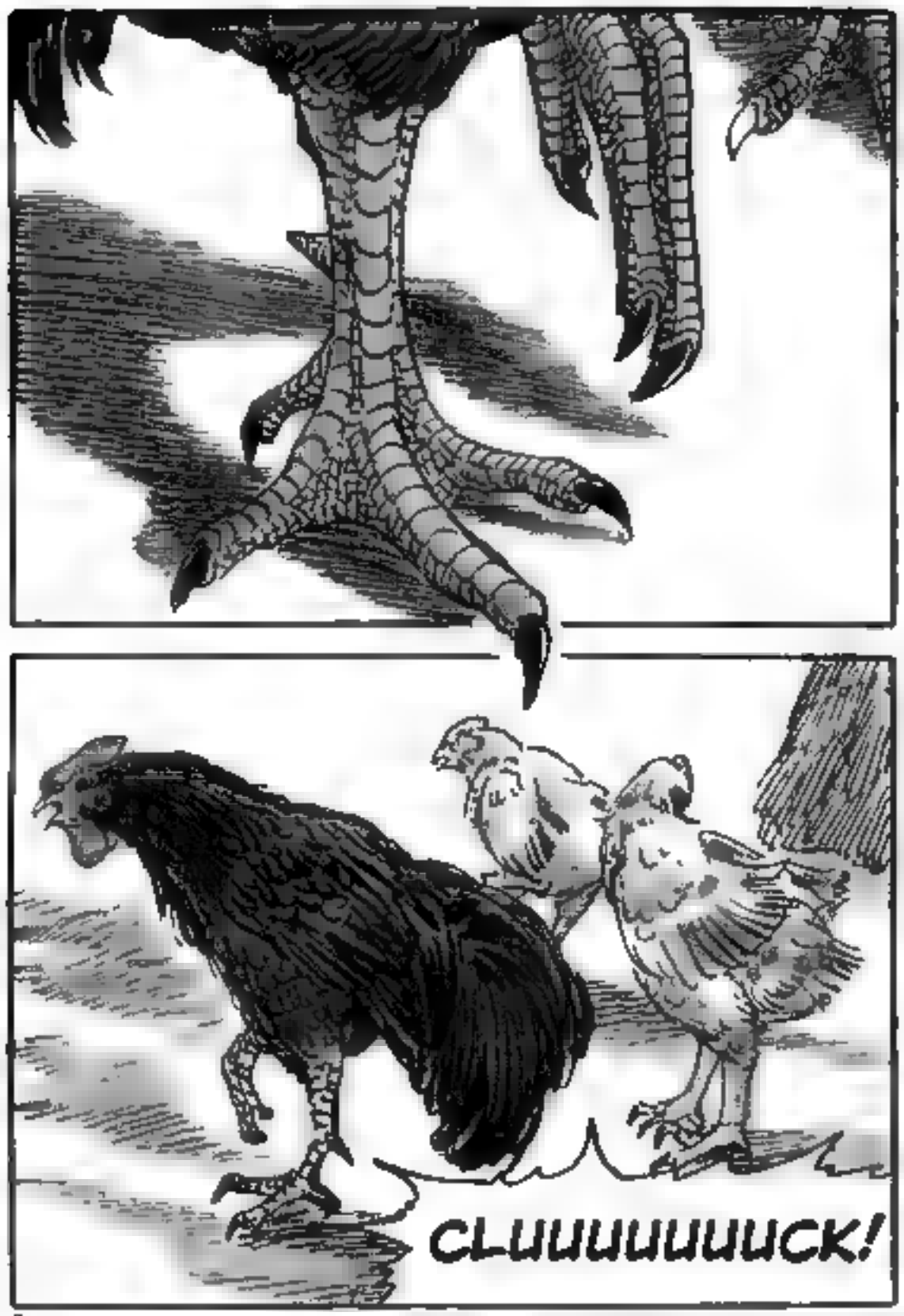
EDITING BY

HIGHTIDE AND KAZUHIKO

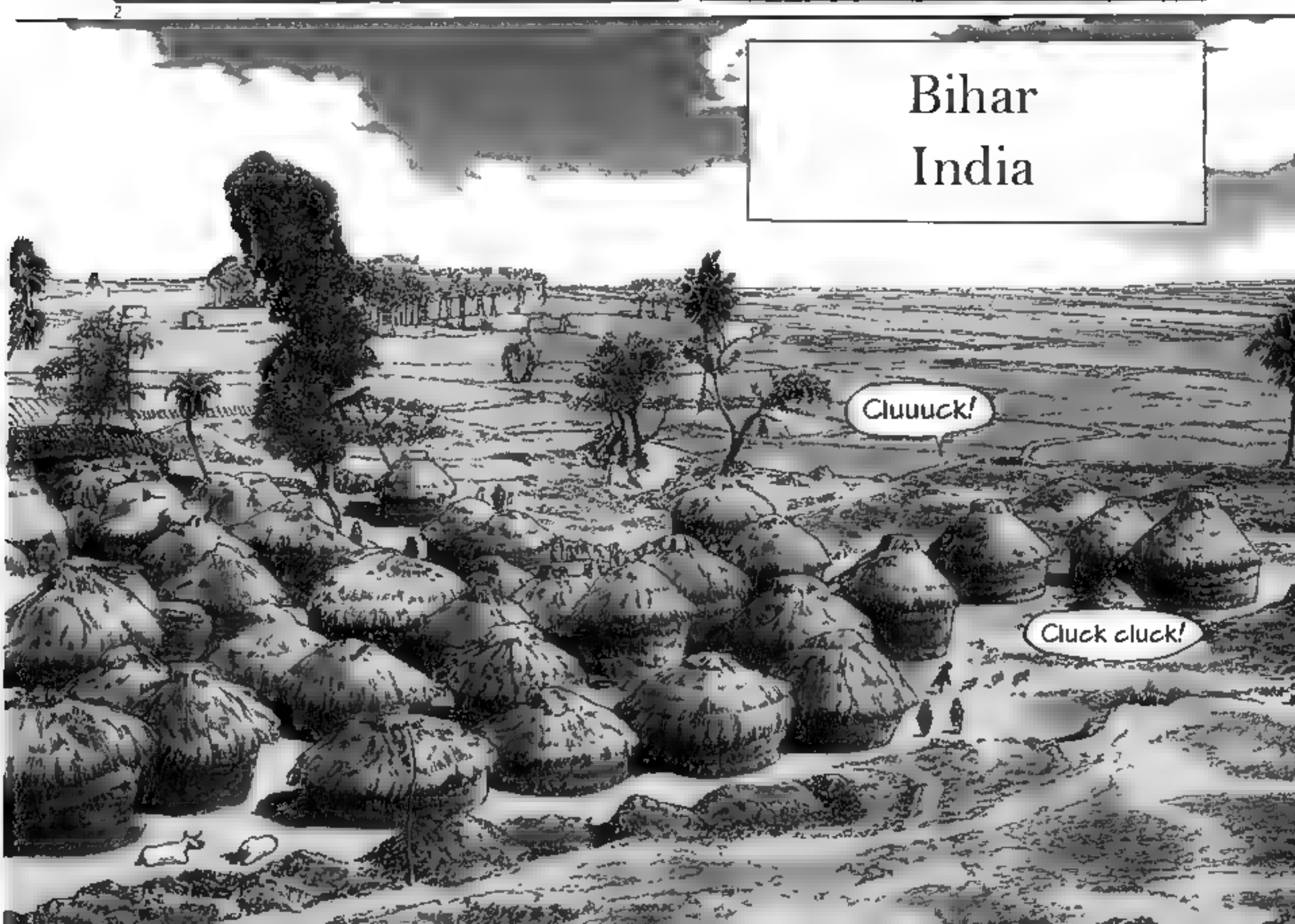
PROOFREADING BY

DESTORYERRING

CHAPTER 4: THE GREAT INDIAN CHICKEN FOOT CHRONICLE



Bihar
India



… !

Well, that sounds exciting! I'm getting sick of having curry all the time!
Indian chickens may be smaller than Japanese ones, but I hear they're incredibly tasty!

Cluck!

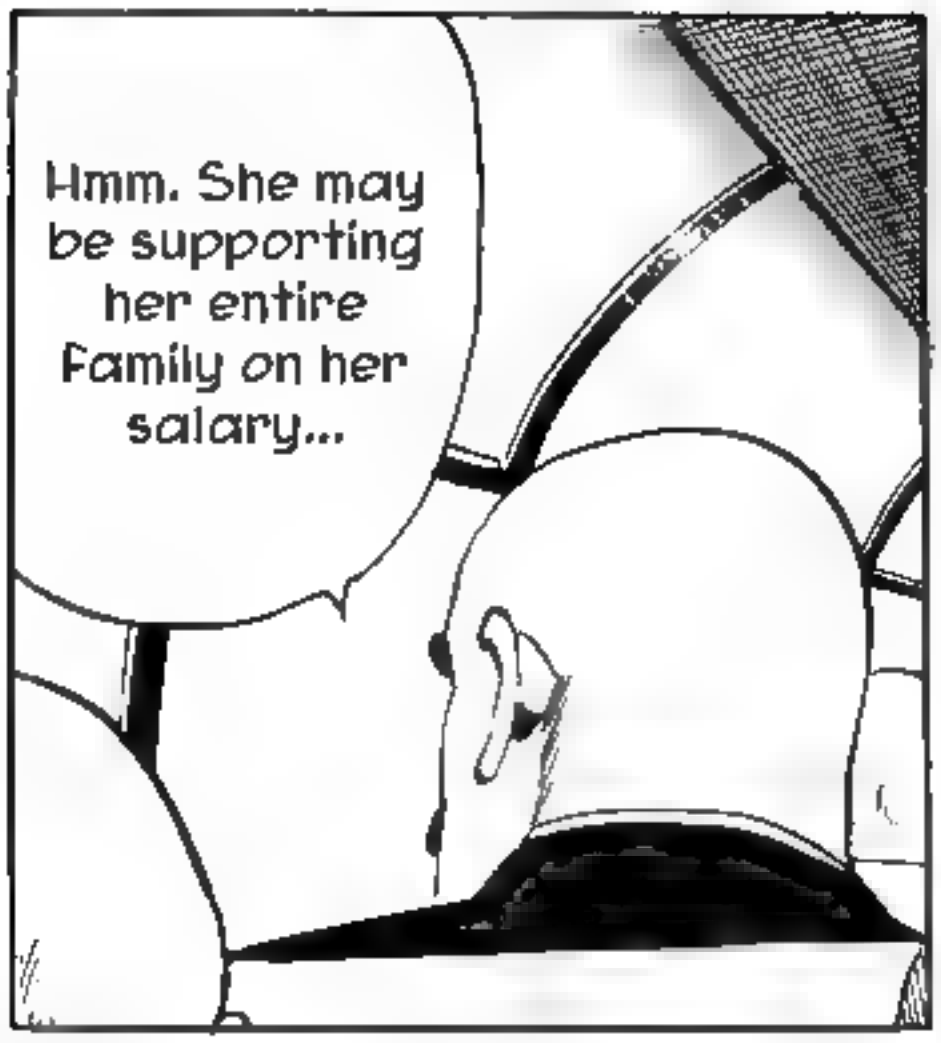
I...I'm sorry. We've just reached my village, and that was my sister...

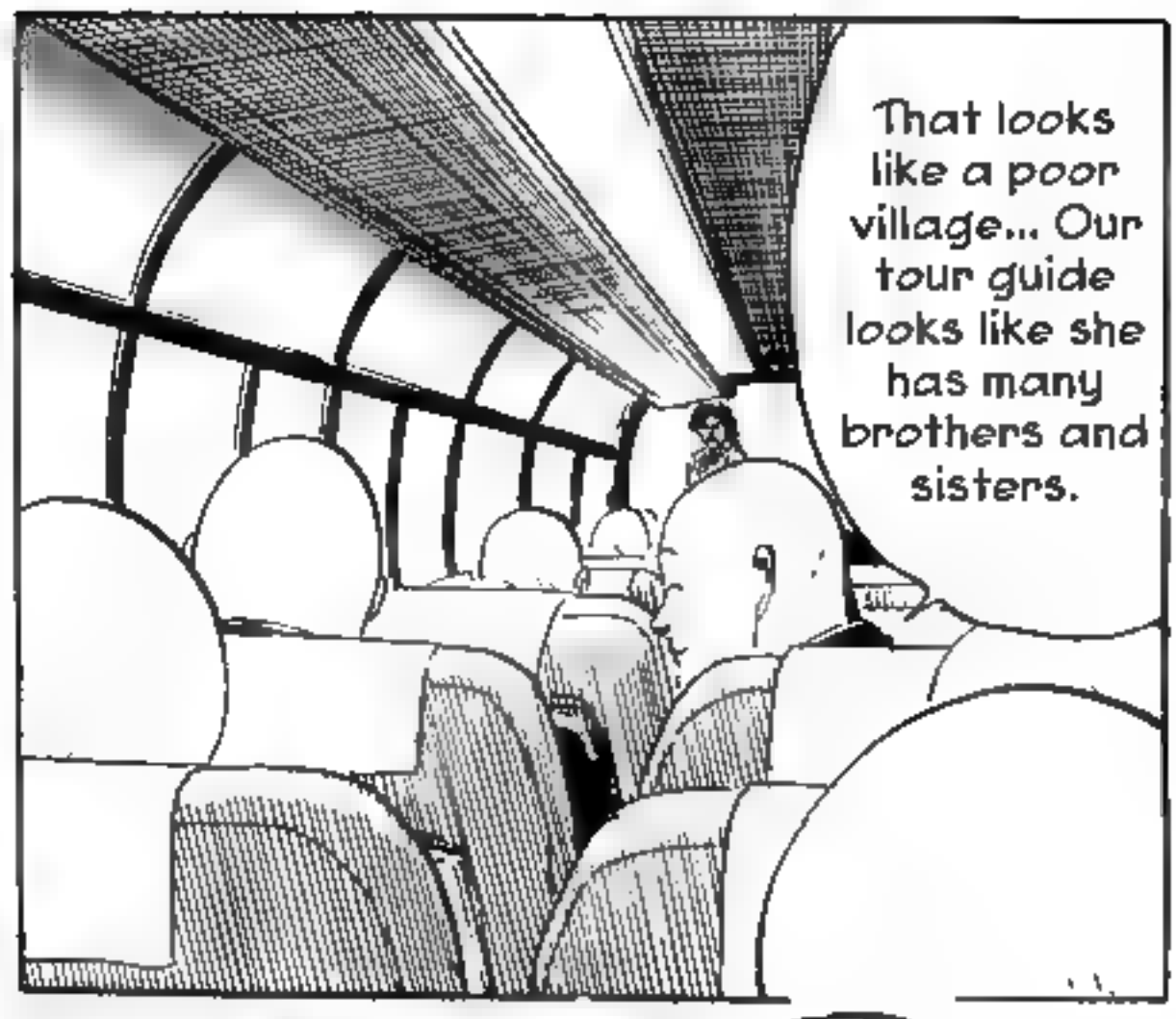
4

Whatever. Just get going.

A... Alright. Let's start the bus.

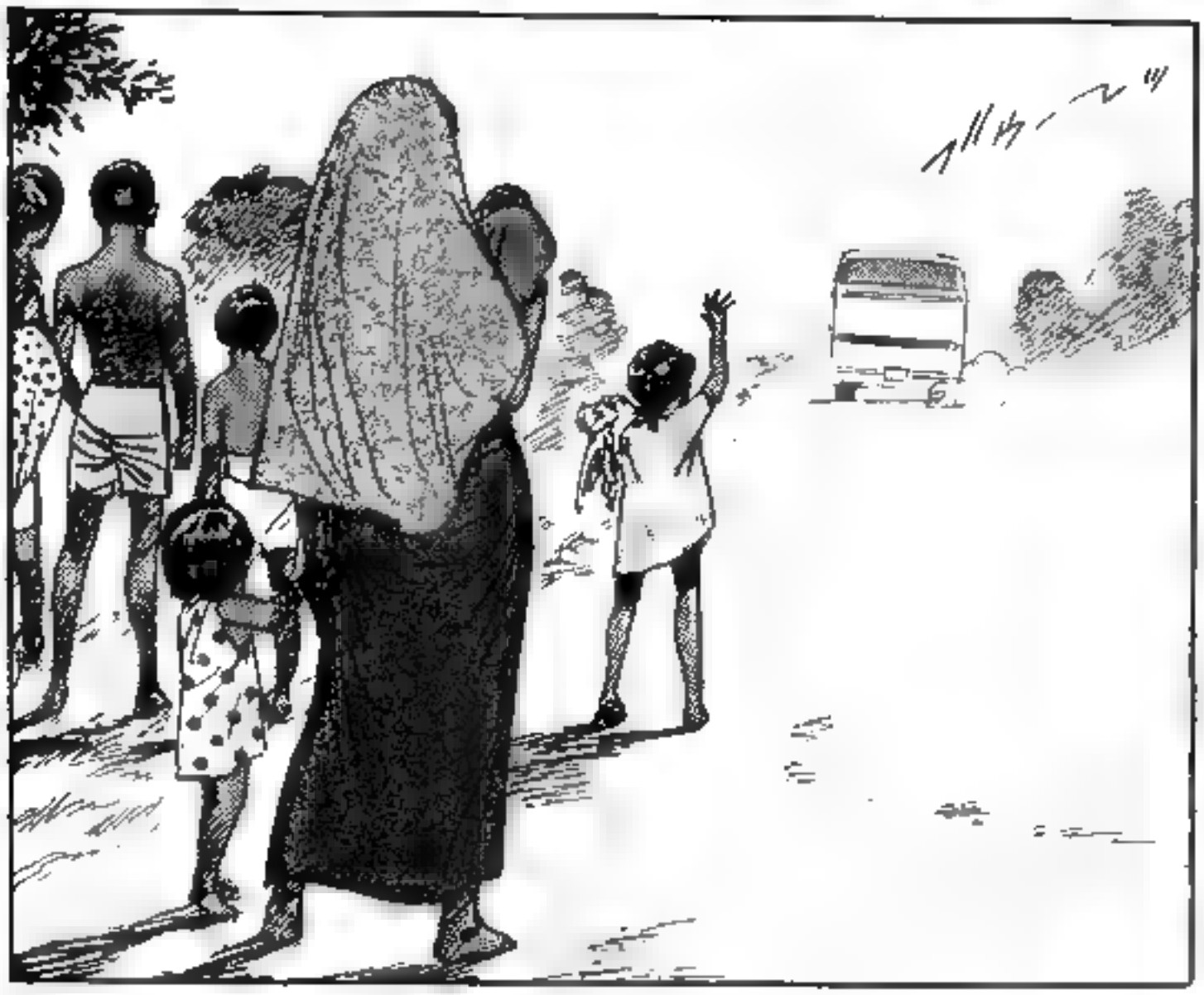
And turn up the aircondi-tioner!


Hmm. She may be supporting her entire family on her salary...


That looks like a poor village... Our tour guide looks like she has many brothers and sisters.

Well done, indeed!

Quite right! That's quite admirable...



б

Uhh... Bodh Gaya is where the Buddha was enlightened, and many pilgrims come here...

Ahhhh! I... am so sorry!

You're a little lacking in education for a tour guide working for the Indian government!

Hold on. Gautama didn't become the Buddha until after he was enlightened.

Yes, yes. We are most grateful.

Now, let us pay our respects to the Buddha.

Don't let it bother you. I know the majority of Indians are Hindu.

It is a place where many scholars gathered to learn about Buddhism...

N...Next, we will be visiting the ruins of Nalanda Monastery...

Xuanzang, the model for Tang Sanzang, who went on a pilgrimage to India in the "Journey to the West", also studied here.

Gaha-haha...

Now, line up, every-one!

Okay, now smile and say, "Buddha"!

I've been here before, Anan.
To think that such a prominent Buddhist Facility flourished a century after the Buddha's lifetime...
Did you know, Professor Munakata, that the Gautama Buddha wore clothing torn and tattered like a rag?
It may have been too prominent.
The dirty brown color of the tattered robe is called "Kasaya" in Indian...
This was translated into Chinese as "Jiasha", and to Japanese as "Kesa".
Those were his only possessions. When he died, he passed down his clothes and bowl to his disciple.
This was the original meaning of the phrase "to pass on the robe and bowl".
That and his bowl he used to beg for food...

Come to think of it, speaking of "Journey to the West", there was the story of a priest who tried to steal Tang Sanzang's beautiful stole...

So the word for a monk's stole is the same word as a dirty color. How amusing.

That just goes to show how much estrangement there has been since the Buddha's time.

He planned to burn Sanzang and his friends to death to add it to his collection of hundreds of stoles...

Say "Buddha"!

Even in Japan, stoles are expected to be made of glittering cloth...

And the priests eat meat and take wives to their hearts' content, which are supposedly forbidden...

If I had the courage, that is!

At the very least, I want to become an ascetic in modern India.

I wish I had been born in the days of Buddhism's founding...

I wanted you to know the pure form of Buddhism, Professor Munakata.

BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION SENDS PILGRIMAGE GROUP TO INDIA WILL HOLD MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR THE TSUNAMI VICTIMS

Two weeks ago
Tokyo

The purpose of this annual pilgrimage is to tour and study the ruins of Buddhism's origins in India. It's customary for a university professor to accompany us as an observer

I don't know anything about Buddhism.

You're Anan from the Buddhist Association...

So what does this pilgrimage have to do with me?

I'm a big fan of your books, so I recommended you.

I know it'd be rude for me to say that anyone would do, but basically all you'd have to do is give weight to the Association's activity,

then write a short piece in the bulletin that will be distributed to temples across the nation.

Are you sure about this...?

I haven't done that in three years... The woman supervising me resigned, so I guess you could say I was too relieved.

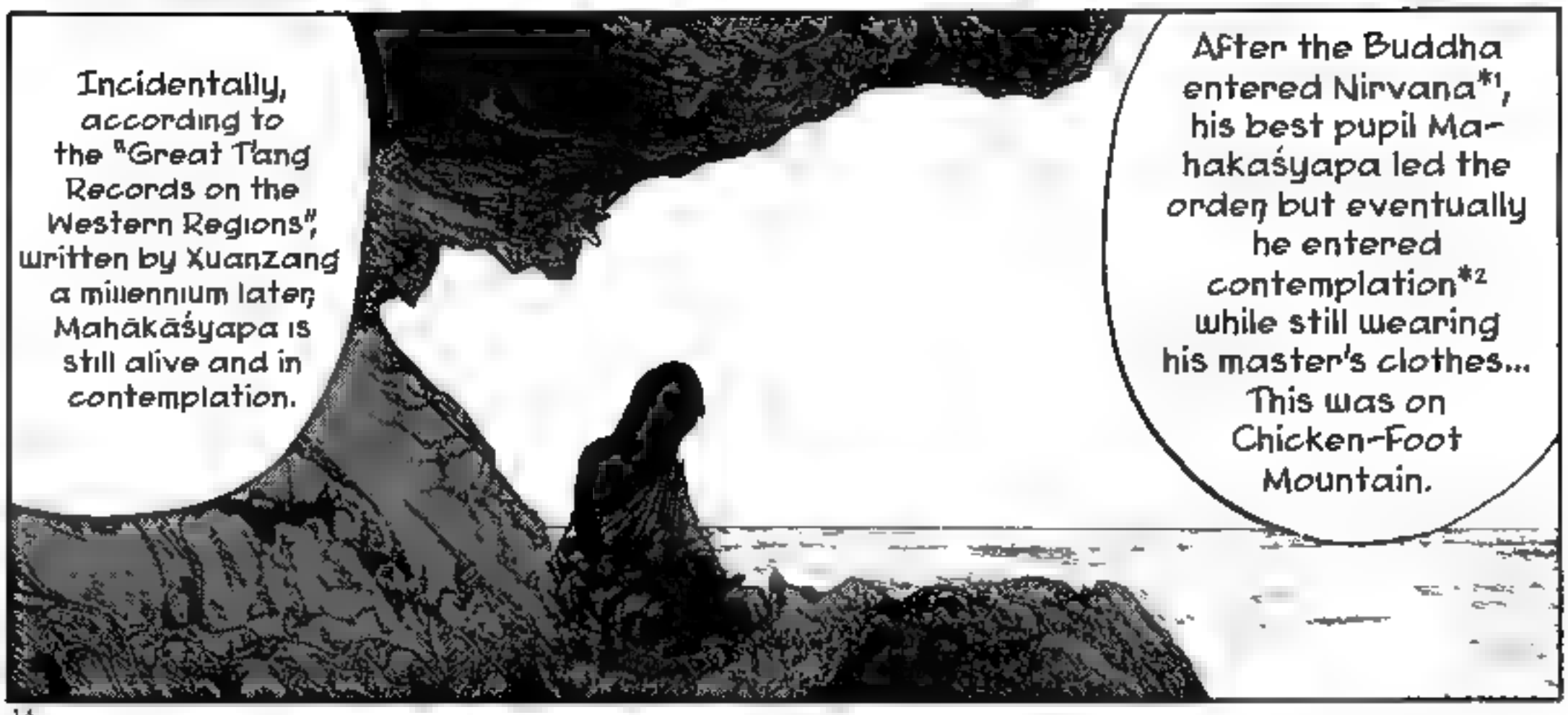
I recall that you published an annual travel journal in a magazine that coincided with the Zodiac.

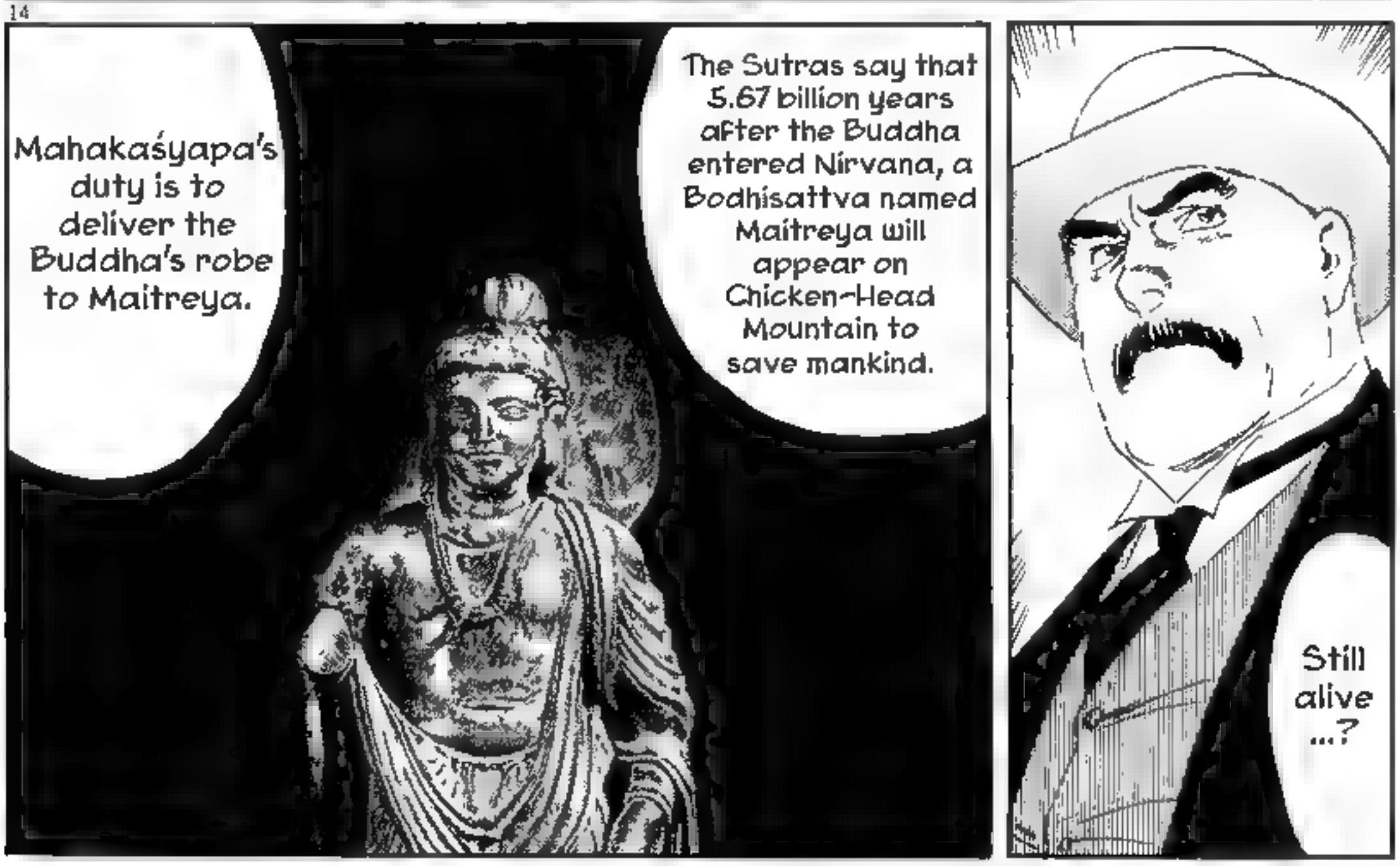
This is an aerial photo-graph of it.

Oh, that reminds me. The pilgrimage is going to stop at a new location this year. It's called "Chicken-Foot Mountain"...

And this is the year of the bird...

Chicken-Foot Moun-tain...!?


Incidentally, according to the "Great T'ang Records on the Western Regions", written by Xuanzang a millennium later, Mahākāśyapa is still alive and in contemplation.
After the Buddha entered Nirvana*1, his best pupil Mahakaśyapa led the order, but eventually he entered contemplation*2 while still wearing his master's clothes... This was on Chicken-Foot Mountain.


Mahakaśyapa's duty is to deliver the Buddha's robe to Maitreya.
The Sutras say that 5.67 billion years after the Buddha entered Nirvana, a Bodhisattva named Maitreya will appear on Chicken-Head Mountain to save mankind.
Still alive ...?

*1 Enter Nirvana
Death of the Buddha

*2 Enter Contemplation
Death of a High Priest

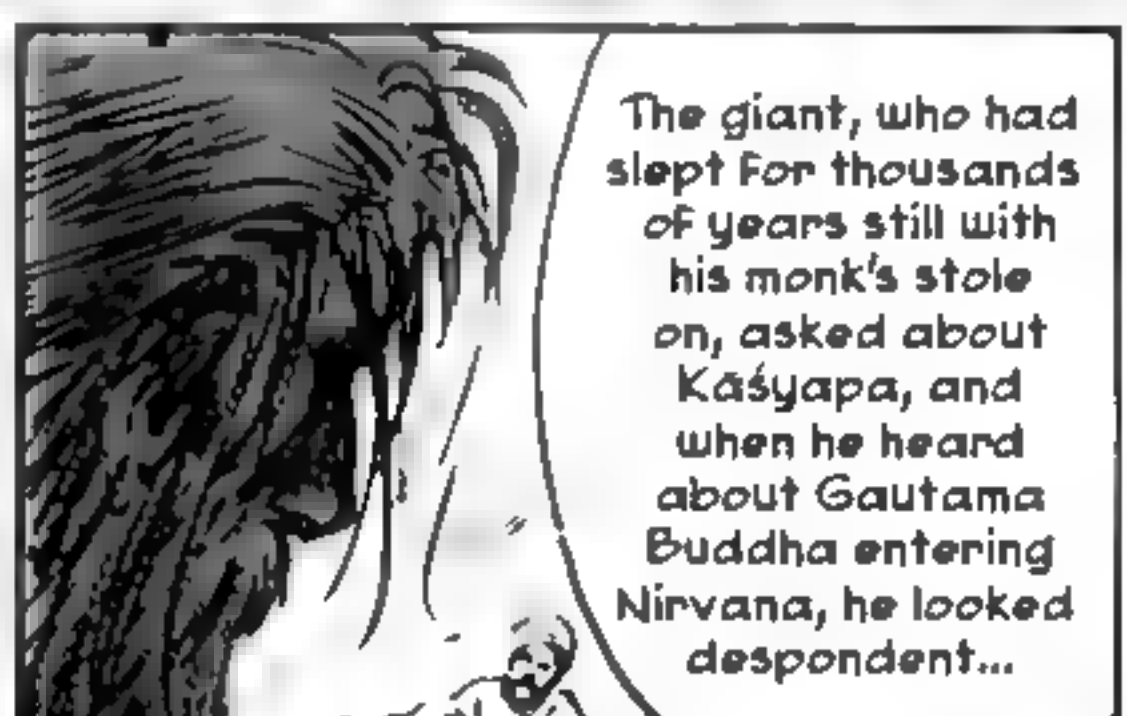
Yes...

And a 5.67 billion year wait... Indian legends sure have quite a large scale...

Chicken-Foot Mountain and Chicken-Head Mountain...

Long ago, a cliff face on a mountain in the Kingdom of Niaosha collapsed to reveal...

There's another story in the "Great Tang Records on the Western Regions".


The giant, who had slept for thousands of years still with his monk's stole on, asked about Kaśyapa, and when he heard about Gautama Buddha entering Nirvana, he looked despondent...

Then he started to spout flames and burned himself up.

What do you say to a journey in the year of the bird, Professor Munakata?
There have been occasional earthquakes in this region as well since the earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean...
I see. That truly is an interesting story...

Uhhh... The cavern that Mahākāśyapa was said to have secluded himself in is at the summit...

Do we have to walk from here? What a pain.

You've got a Rolex, Priest Hoto? That's a real luxury!

It should take about 30 minutes.

Phew, that alcohol really knocked me out last night!

NAHIIN!

Hail the Bodhisattva Kannon, Hail Benzaiten...

This is so hard... Mind leading me by the hand, miss tour guide?

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH, YOU WORLDLY PRIEST!!

YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF!

WAA AUGH !!

Professor Munakata, your role here is as an observer. I kindly ask you not to stick out too much.

If I can't call him worldly, I'll call him a perverted priest instead!

We are about to head south to hold memorial services for the tsunami victims. The Indian government is treating us as official visitors!

HOW DARE YOU CALL US WORLDLY PRIESTS!!

KNOW YOUR PLACE AND STAY THERE, YOU PATRONIZED SCHOLAR!!

HOW ACCURSED OF YOU TO INSULT THOSE WHO HAVE INVITED YOU AND PAID ALL YOUR EXPENSES!

Patronized scholar!?

You don't have to apologize! I can't believe they called me a patronized scholar, of all things....!!

I'm so sorry! You wouldn't have had this unpleasant experience if I hadn't invited you...

...Dhan-yavaad.

The summit's in view now... Professor Munakata.

GRIN GRIN

There happens to be a Chicken-Foot Mountain in China and Japan as well.

There are cases where they have a rock that looks like a chicken's foot, but this boulder doesn't appear to be shaped like that at all...

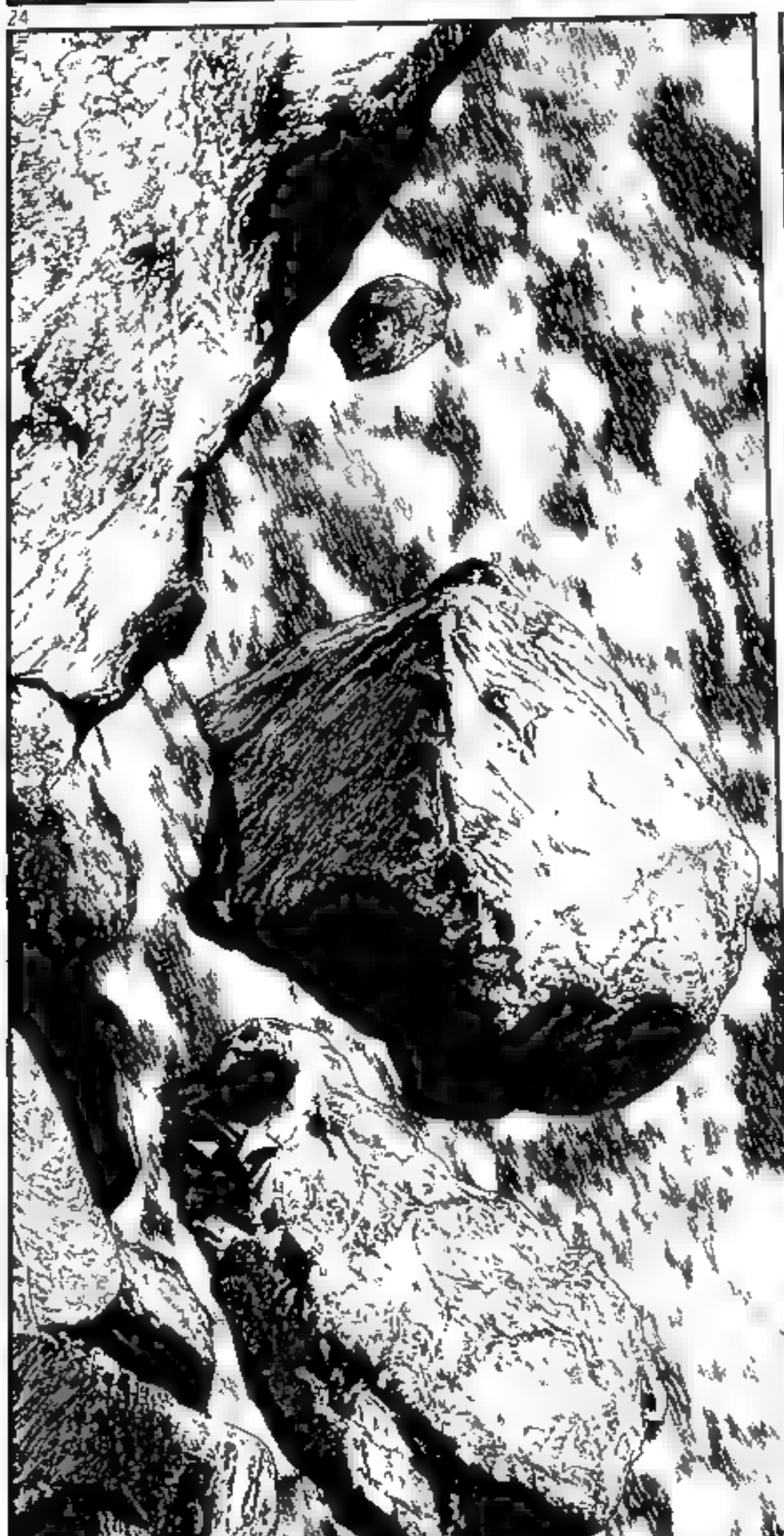
Hey, there's nothing here! Just a bunch of rocks...

...Hmpf!

Well, we've climbed all the way up here. Let's at least take a picture for the bulletin...

ゴゴゴゴ

Oh...!?
EARTH-
QUAKE
!!



GET DOWN! LOOK OUT, PRO-FESSOR MUNAKA-TA!!

The cliff collapsed to reveal...

T...THERE'S ANOTHER EARTH-QUAKE COMING! WE SHOULD GET OUT OF HERE!!

A BIRD!? BUT IT'S SO BIG...!!

It's a bird... Fossil! No wonder it's called "Chicken-Foot Mountain"...

Diatryma

Phorusrhacos

Moa

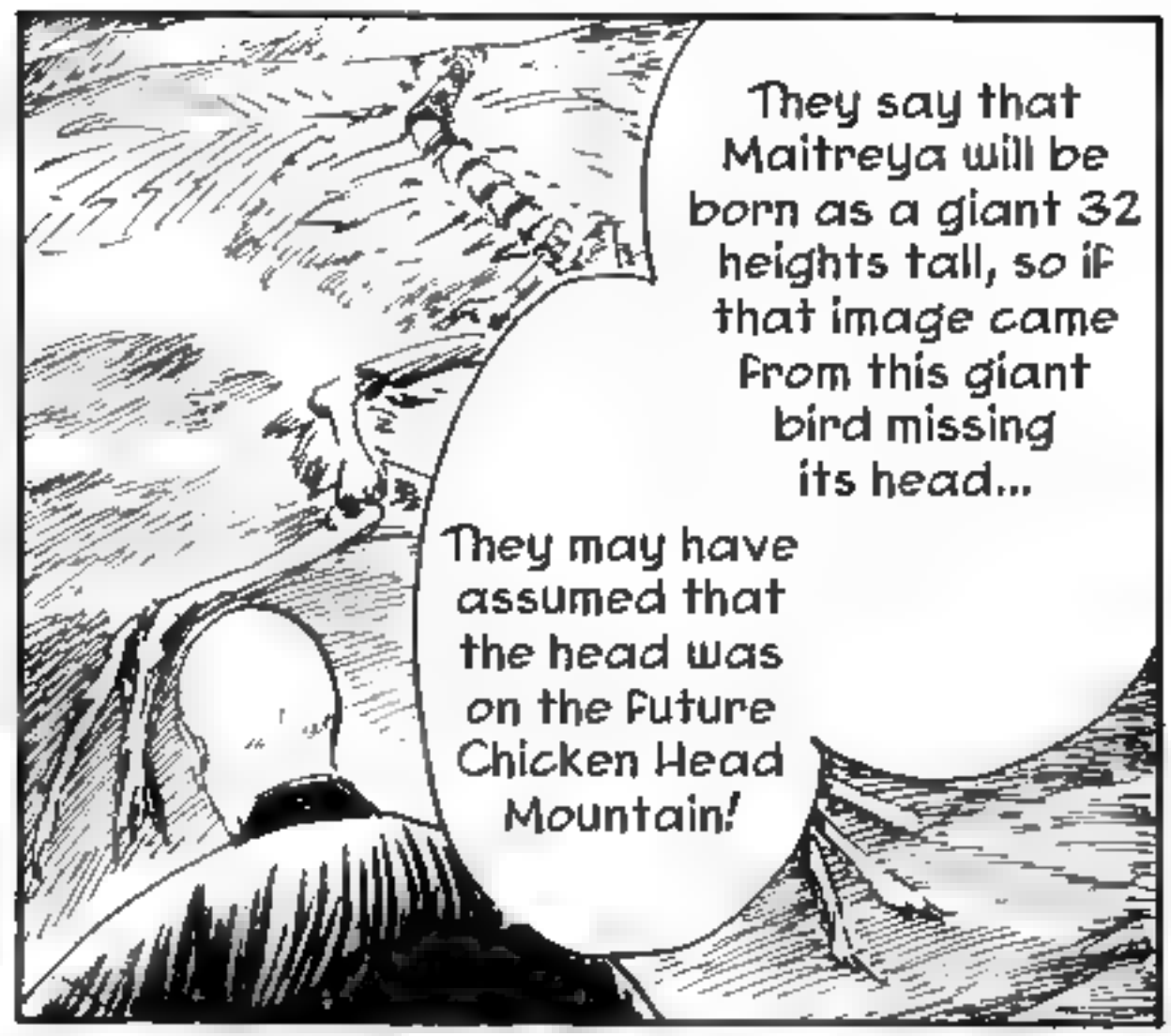
Tens of thousands of years ago, there was an age where giant flightless birds ruled the land. Their last vestiges were the now-extinct "Aepyornis" of Madagascar and the "Moa" of New Zealand...

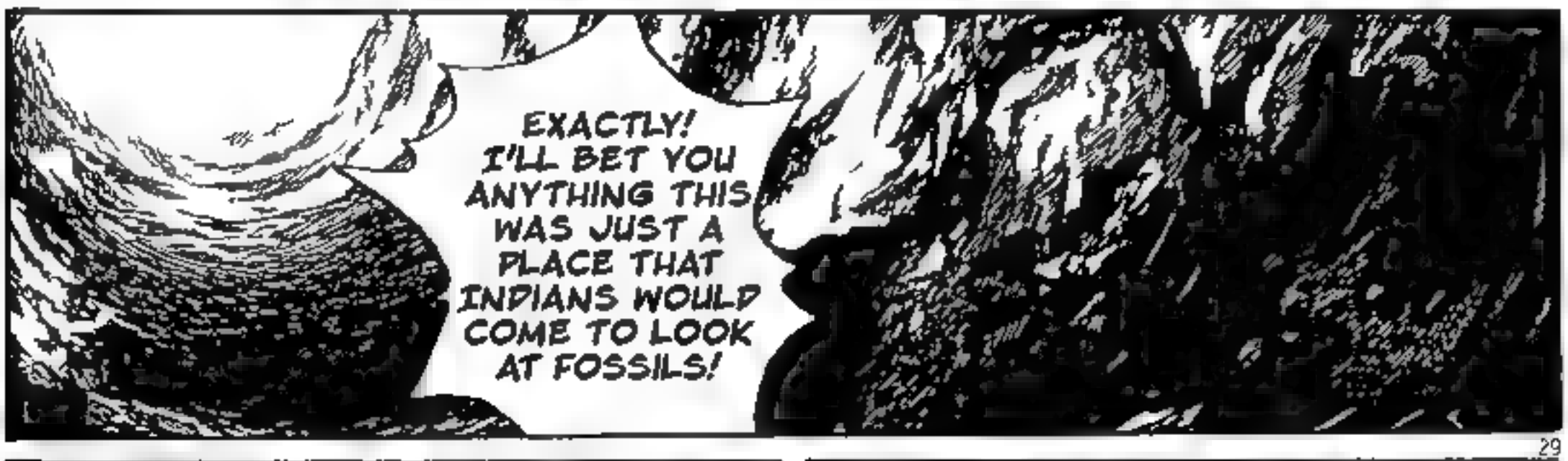
The preposterously long 5.67 billion years after which Maitreya will appear may have come from their experience of something like this!

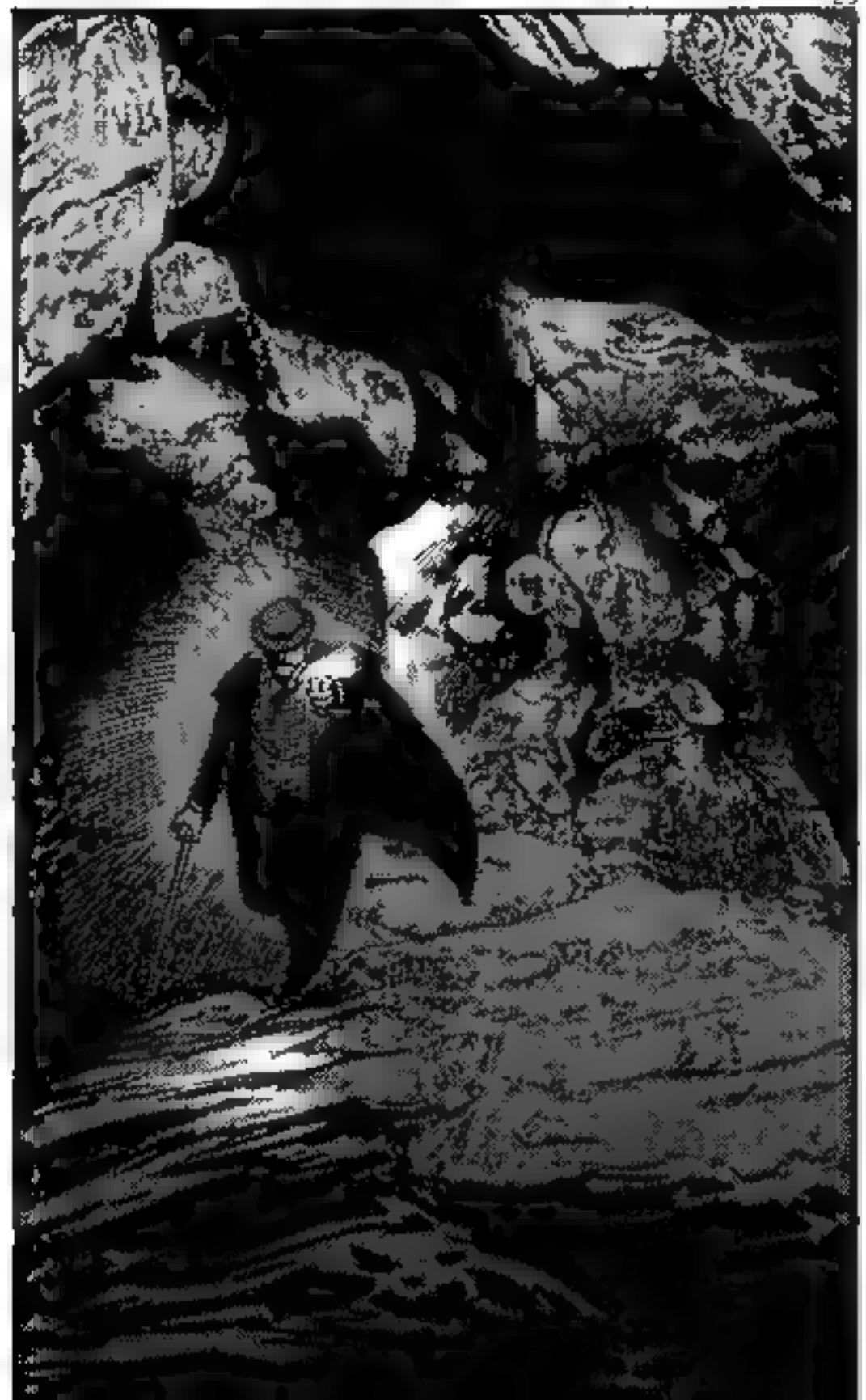
Even people ignorant towards Fossils would have had a vague notion that this was a bird that had come from a time far in the past.

Come to think of it, the mountain Mahākāśyapa entered contemplation on is known as both Chicken-Foot Mountain and Spirit Eagle Mountain, Maitreya will appear on Chicken-Head Mountain, and the giant's legend takes place in the Kingdom of Niaosha. This may be the reason that all these place names coincide with birds in some way or another...

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ANAN!?
D...DO YOU INTEND TO USE THIS TO EXPLAIN AWAY THE SECRETS OF BUD-DHISM? PREPOSTER-OUS!!


They say that Maitreya will be born as a giant 32 heights tall, so if that image came from this giant bird missing its head...
They may have assumed that the head was on the future Chicken Head Mountain!


EXACTLY! I'LL BET YOU ANYTHING THIS WAS JUST A PLACE THAT INDIANS WOULD COME TO LOOK AT FOSSILS!



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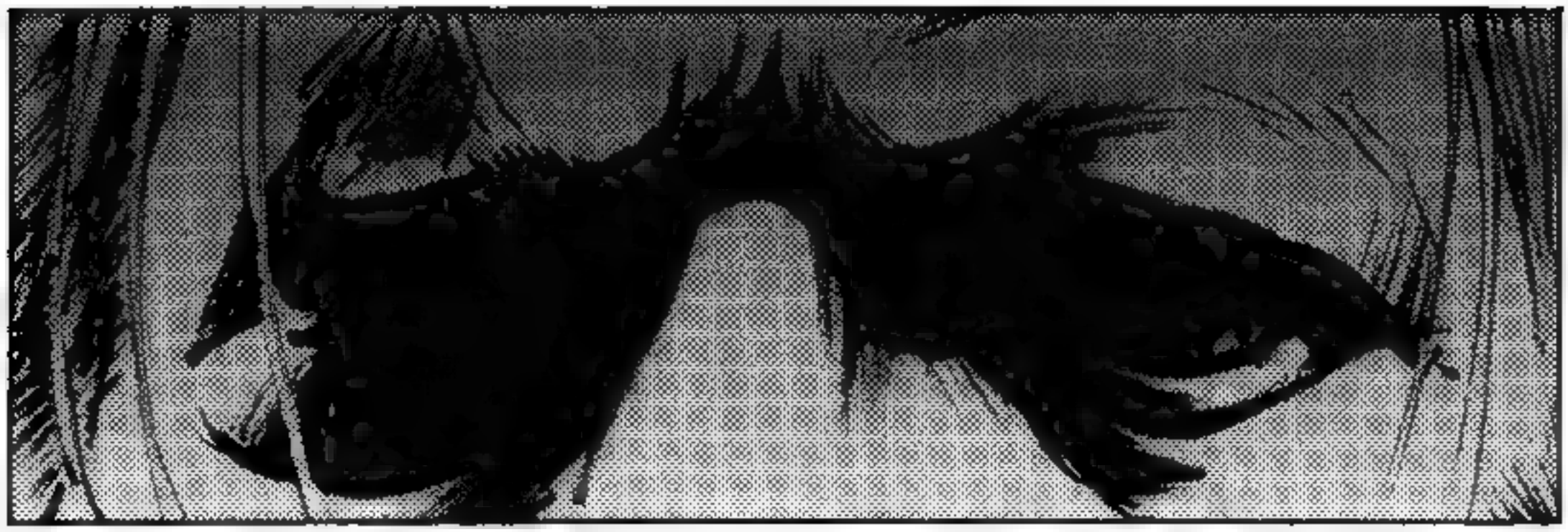
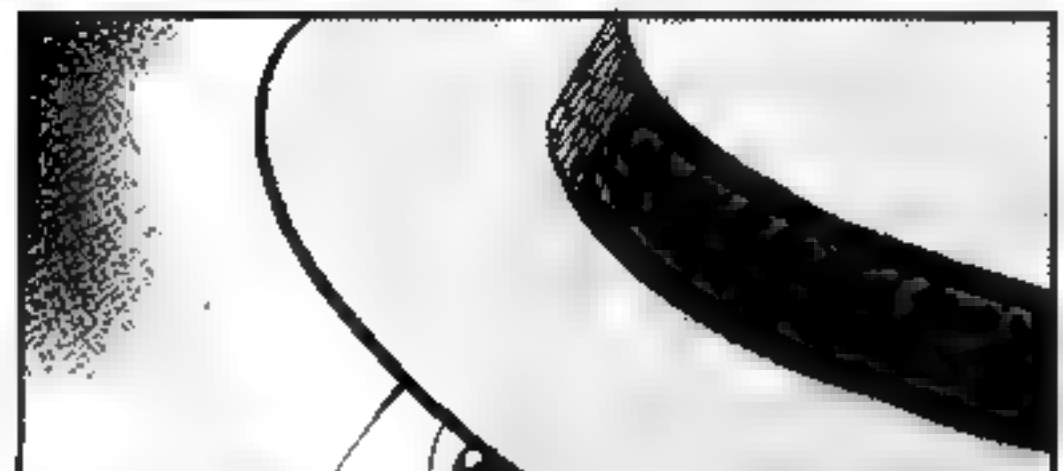
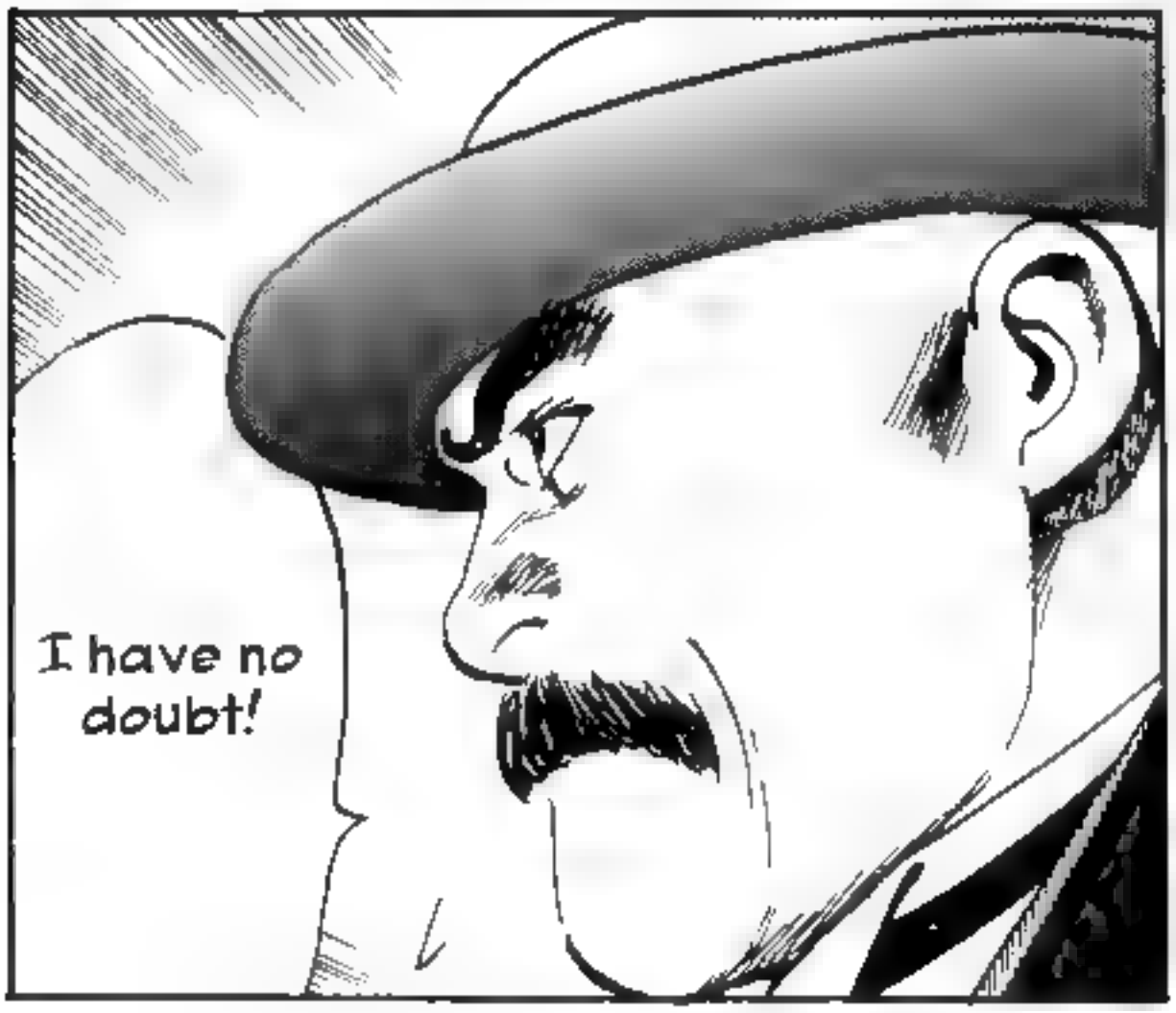
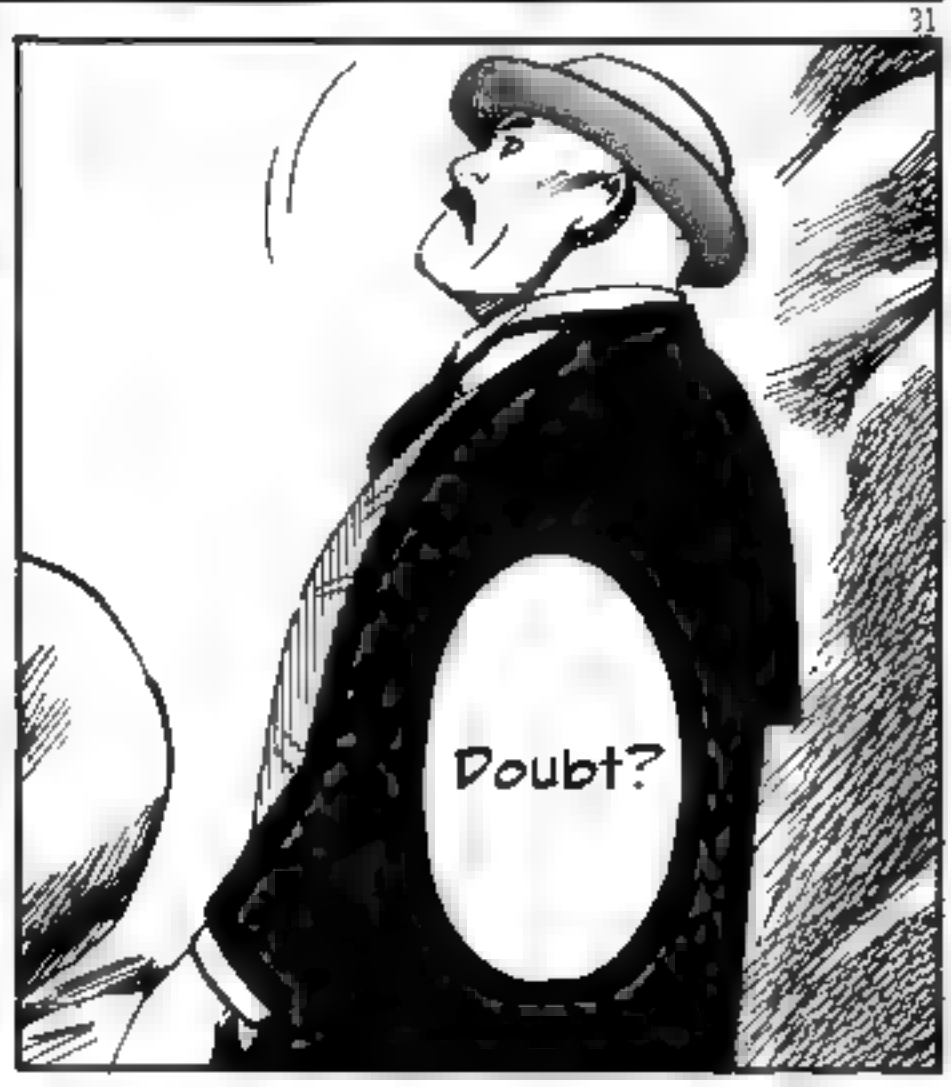
You look lik■ you are seeing the impossible...
Why do you look so shocked?



My name does not matter now.
Only those with doubts come here.
What is your doubt?


You can't be...!
Mahakaś-yapa...!?
...No!


I have no doubt!


Doubt?

That's strange. Where could he have...

We really need to get out of here! It could be dangerous...

Oh... No.

Have you seen Professor Munakata? He's the guy with the mustache.

O...

Of course I do! There may be a lot of mysteries, but I have no doubts!

Do you believe that you can know all there is in the world with naught but the power of knowl-edge...?

...Do you really believe that this world is built on "knowledge"?

But if a perverted priest or two causes you to be upset, does this not cloud the knowledge you are so proud of?

My apologies for adding to your mysteries.

You are quite high-spirited for a child.

A child !?

Why you ....!

How did you know?

They are all obstacles to those who seek the truth.

Even the gods and buddhas are grieved by many things.

Hehehe... The times may change, but the seeds of anger never go away.

I will teach you one aspect of the "state of enlightenment".

Let me give you a free tip for coming all this way.

When people die, their spirit, called "atman", is drawn into a massive vortex of light...

Consider all people to be yourself.

Consider all people to be gods and buddhas.

"Brahma" ...

The god who created the universe.

The atman return to be part of Brahma: "Brahman".

Do you know why Brahma created this world...?

I know about that. The spirits are then continuously reborn For all eternity.

That's the Indian philosophy of reincarnation.

There is the experience of a researcher seeking the truth through knowledge...

The world is made up of the entirety of life!

It was so he could experience all life!

And the experience of those who whip and mock him.

The experience of a man dying in agony...

The high priests who live ascetic lives and the plain perverted priest, they are no different from you. They are all atman, and they are all Brahman. There is neither good nor evil, nor is there the sequence of time.

He is born into the world as billions upon billions of people, experiences joy, sorrow, suffering, and the fear of death. He lives these lives thousands upon thousands of times, and dies thousands upon thousands of times.

You could call this creating the world. Or you could call it keeping the world in motion...

You and I were originally one being....

We are all temporary forms of Brahma...

Does that not put things into perspective, and quell your anguish and your rage strong enough to curse the gods...?

The baby that is tormented and killed in its infancy is Brahma, and the parent that kills it is Brahma...

...Is that "enlightenment" ...?

.....

No... I don't know if it is or not... I'm still in training...

A...
Anan!?
Here! P...
Professor, is
that you!?

!

T...The air's not so good in here.

I ventured in here thinking I would be alone, but there's still the risk of aftershocks. We should go back outside.

OHHH! A BUDDHA ON A ROCK FACE... THAT'S, MAHAKAS-YAPA!

THIS MUST'VE BEEN WOVEN POSTHUMOUSLY, PATTERNED AFTER THE ROBE THE BUDDHA WILL PASS ON TO MAITREYA! WHAT A BLESSING!

It's covered in dust, but he's got a giant robe on! Look, it's woven real thick with gold and silver thred...

Hey, it's tearing apart!

D... PLEASE, DON'T!

Let's all take back a piece as a souvenir!

LOOK OUT!!

WAAAUG H... RU... RUN!!

GRAB THIS, ANAN!!
HEY! SOME-BODY GIVE ME A HAND!!
.....!
AHHH-HHHH!

H-HURRY! GRAB ON!

ANAN ...!!

...We will meet again one day, Professor Munakata...

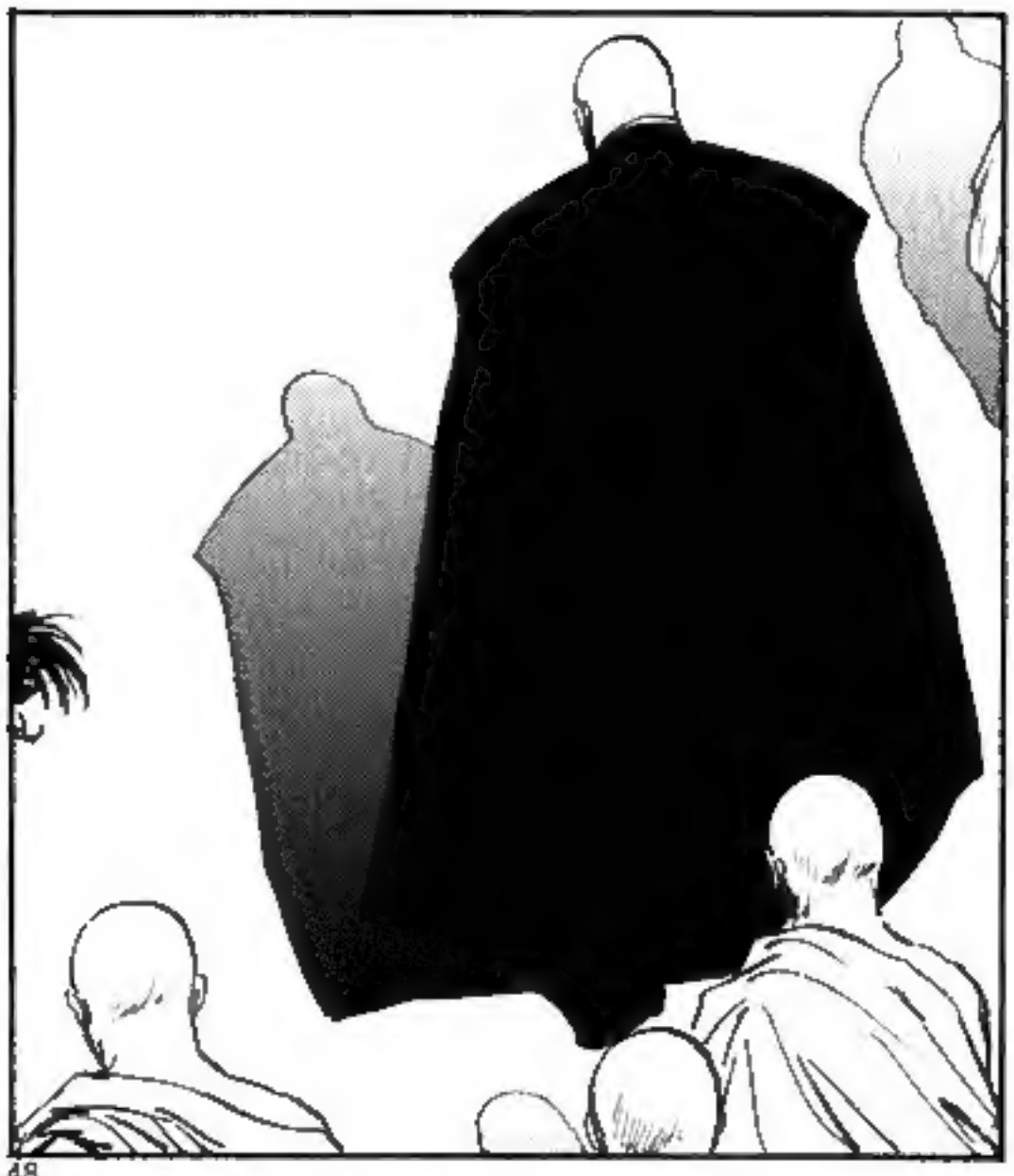
ANAN ...!!

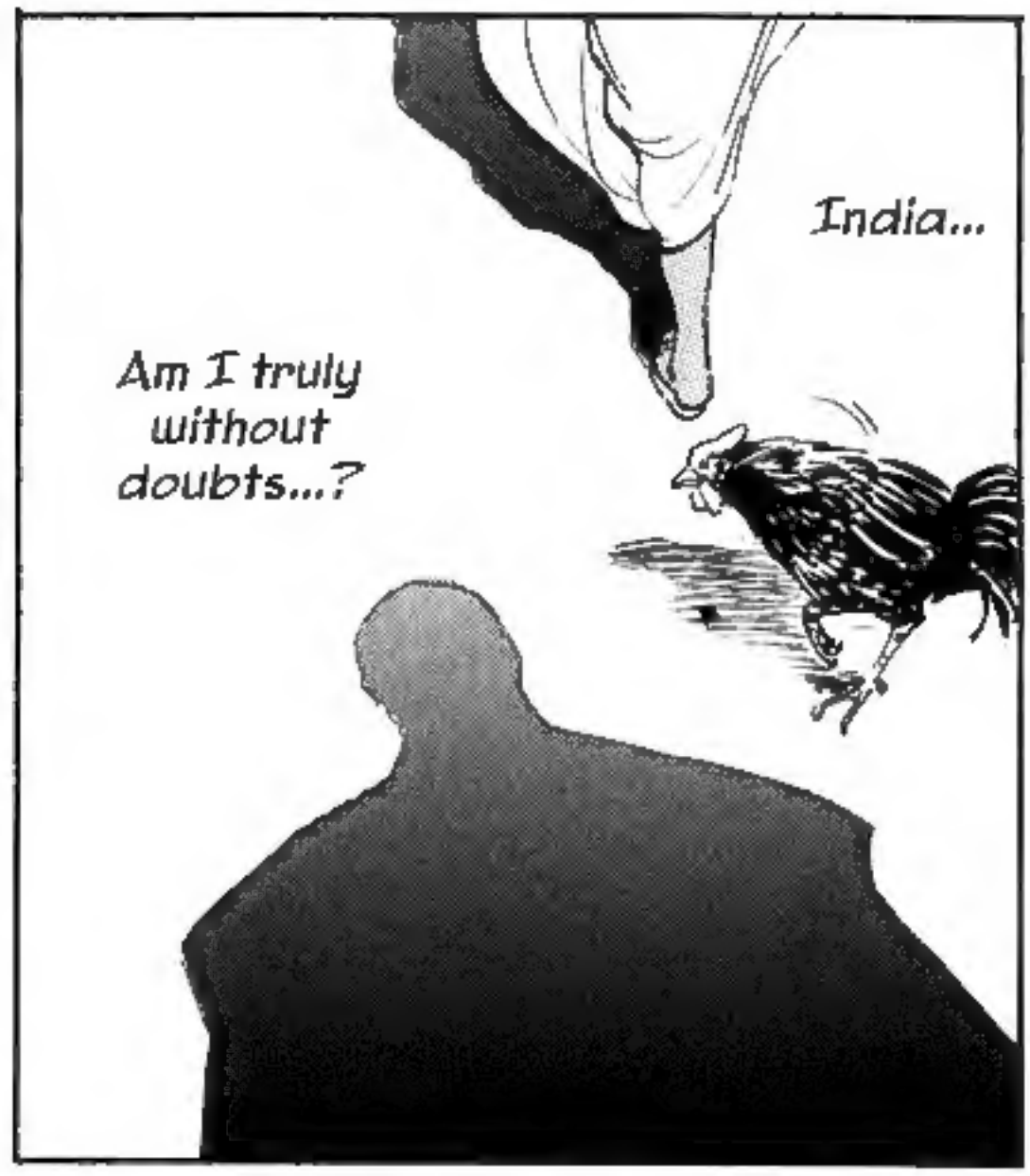
AWA
WA-
WA...
AI-
IIEEE
EEEE
EEEE
!!

.....

Because this is India...
He will perform his difficult asceticism, die, and be reborn, I know it...

...I know that Anan will be reborn, and become a priest again.





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or perhaps he knows not.
"Rig Veda"
"Hymn of Creation"

...Whose eye controls this world in highest heaven, he verily knows it,

Who verily knows and who can here declare it, whence it was born and whence comes this creation?

The Case Records of Professor Munakata Collection 1 – END

これらの作品はフィクションです。
実在の団体・人物・事件などには
一切関係ありません。

◎初出一覧◎

巫女の血脈
『ビッグコミック』2004年10月25日号、11月10日号

◆

百足と龍
『ビッグコミック』2004年11月25日号、12月10日号、12月25日号

◆

天平のメリー・クリスマス
『ビッグコミック』2005年1月10日号、1月25日号

◆

大天竺鶏足記
『ビッグコミック』2005年2月10日号、2月25日号

BIG COMICS SPECIAL

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THE CASE BOOKS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 4

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